

# RIGHT TO HEALTH

These notes were produced as part of a collaboration between the Coordination asile.ge and the Law Clinic of the University of Geneva. They are intended for unaccompanied minors and unaccompanied young adults living in Geneva. Their purpose is to inform about certain rights in understandable terms to make them accessible to everyone. For more detailed information, you can consult the Law Clinic's brochure on the rights of young unaccompanied migrants.

Good health is a major resource for social, economic, and individual development. It is an important dimension of the quality of life. Thus, access to housing, education, sufficient financial resources, feeling safe are important elements for health. It is sometimes difficult to be healthy when some of these elements are missing. Doctors and healthcare professionals can support you.

## **Affiliation to health insurance**

Health insurance covers part of your medical care. If you depend on the Hospice Général, your medical expenses may be covered depending on your status.

Having health insurance is mandatory as soon as you reside in Switzerland, regardless of your age. If you are under 18, your legal representative must take the steps to insure you. If you are over 18 years old when you arrive in Geneva, you are insured by the Hospice Général. As soon as you are independent from the Hospice Général, you will be responsible for choosing your health insurance, paying the premiums and contributions to your health costs. If you do not have legal status, you can also have health insurance. It becomes then very important to pay the bills regularly to avoid legal proceedings that may affect your future steps.

## **Patient rights and medical secrecy**

The doctor you consult is subject to medical secrecy. It is important to know that the doctor is not allowed to transmit any information concerning your state of health without your agreement.

Doctors must explain to you the medical treatment and care you are receiving. You have the right to refuse care or to interrupt any treatment. It is important to discuss this with your doctors. Nobody can force you to undergo medical treatment.

You have the right to consult your medical file and receive an explanation of anything you don't understand. You can request copies. You can be accompanied by a person of your choice to an appointment with the doctors. The presence of an interpreter during all your medical appointments is possible. The interpreter is subject to medical secrecy and is not allowed to divulge any information.

A public hospital must provide you with an interpreter free of charge if you have difficulty understanding the care or treatment offered by the medical staff. Private practices do not necessarily provide interpreters during medical visits.

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## Access to psychiatric and psychological care

If you are sad, depressed, or anxious, have dark thoughts or want to die, or if you consume too much alcohol, cannabis, or other substances, it is important to consult a doctor quickly. It could be your family doctor or the hospital emergency room. This doctor may refer you to a psychiatrist or a psychologist.

At the hospital there is a specialized centre for young people who feel bad psychologically: MALATAVIE. There is also a hotline open 7 days a week, around the clock. Some associations also offer psychological consultations, such as Appartenances and Pluriels. The easiest way is to ask your doctor to contact them.

## Dental care

Dental care and treatment are not covered by basic health insurance. However, if you are a minor, you have access to youth dental clinics where treatment is free of charge or covered by the Hospice Général. You must contact your social assistant at the Hospice Général before going there.

If you are an adult, the social assistant will provide a "guarantee" to the dentist, which will allow you to start treatment for an amount of 500 Swiss francs. If the treatment exceeds 500 Swiss francs, the dentist will produce an estimate and send it to your social assistant. The social assistant will then submit this estimate to an expert who will check whether the proposed dental care is appropriate. In case of severe dental pain or abscess, go to the hospital emergency room to receive immediate care.

If you do not receive social benefits, you can consult a dentist and ask for an estimate. You must tell the dentist that you don't have the money to pay but that you will apply to private foundations to cover these costs. A social service can help you with these procedures. If you do not have legal status, you can go to CAMSCO.

## Access to family planning, contraception, or prevention of sexually transmitted diseases

You have the right to free consultations with the Sexual Health and Family Planning Unit regardless of your legal status, age, origin, gender identity or sexual orientation. You can ask questions about contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, etc. Methods of contraception are not reimbursed by your health insurance. If you need them, they are at your own cost, unless you are covered by the care network for asylum seekers (RSA). You can obtain a pregnancy test or the morning-after pill for about 10 Swiss francs from the Sexual Health and Family Planning Unit. You can also get it from a pharmacy, after completing a confidential questionnaire with a pharmacist.

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## Addresses

**Unité santé jeunes des HUG** : +41 22 372 33 87, [contact.santejeunes@hcuge.ch](mailto:contact.santejeunes@hcuge.ch), Boulevard de la Cluse 87.

**Association Pluriels** : +41 22 328 68 20, [pluriels@pluriels.ch](mailto:pluriels@pluriels.ch),  
Rue des Voisins 14 (3rd floor).

Here you can consult with a psychologist (no health insurance required). Community interpreters are available.

**Association Appartenances** : +41 22 781 02 05,  
[www.appartenances-ge.ch](http://www.appartenances-ge.ch), Boulevard Saint Georges 72.  
Psychotherapeutic care and consultation is provided. Community interpreters available.

**La Roseraie** : +41 (22) 552 02 64, [info@centreroseraie.ch](mailto:info@centreroseraie.ch), Rue de la Maladière 2.  
Psychological support service.

**Programme santé migrants (PSM)** : +41 22 372 33 33, [www.migrantcare.ch](http://www.migrantcare.ch), Rue Gabrielle-Perret-Gentil 4.

**Urgences pédiatriques des HUG (until 16 years)** : Avenue de la Roseraie 47.

**CAMSCO (si tu n'as pas d'assurance maladie)** : +41 22 372 53 11,  
[www.hug-ge.ch/consultation/soins-communautaires-camsco](http://www.hug-ge.ch/consultation/soins-communautaires-camsco), Rue Hugo de Senger 4.

**Clinique universitaire de médecine dentaire (CUMD)** : +41 22 379 40 00,  
[info-cumd@unige.ch](mailto:info-cumd@unige.ch), 19 Rue Lambard. By appointment.

**Malatavie (Unité de crise pour ado)** : +41 22 372 48 57, Avenue de Beau-Séjour 20.

**Point d'eau** : +41 22 732 67 00, [www.carrefour-rue.ch](http://www.carrefour-rue.ch), Rue Chandieu 4. You will find a free hygiene and health area (provision of showers as well as nursing and medical care).

**Unité de santé sexuelle et planning familial (USSPF)** : +41 22 372 55 00 ; [santesexuelle-planningfamiliale@hcuhe.ch](mailto:santesexuelle-planningfamiliale@hcuhe.ch) ; Boulevard de la Cluse 47, 4th floor. You can ask questions about contraception, pregnancy and having children, sexually transmitted diseases, and other questions of sexual health.

**Droit des patients** : <https://www.vd.ch/themes/sante-soins-et-handicap/patients-et-residents-droits-et-qualite-de-soins/les-droits-des-patients/>



