

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

We welcome you to our pediatric practice and thank you for entrusting the health of your children to us. We will strive to honor this confidence by providing the highest standard of care for your children. In order to do this we need your cooperation and consideration. The purpose of these basic guidelines is to state our policies so that this care can be provided as efficiently as possible for the benefit of all.

OFFICE HOURS AND APPOINTMENTS

Northside Office Hours are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm—Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 12:00 pm on Saturday (for sick visits only)

Southside Office Hours are 8:00 am to 7:00 pm—Monday to Thursday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm on Friday and 10:00 am to 2:00 pm on Sundays (for sick visits only)

Patients are seen by appointment only, so please call in advance before bringing your child in. Unless there is an “emergency” walk in visits will not be seen since this is unfair to already scheduled patients who would have to be seen later and with less available time. For this same reason, please do not ask to “add-in” another child when you arrive at the office for a sibling’s appointment. Again, please call in advance. Emergencies and unexpected delays may disrupt the best of schedules and we beg your understanding when this occurs. Being on time for our appointments will greatly help us to see you on time. Occasionally we may need to see a child “out of order” because of severe illness or discomfort. For your convenience we have two offices, located on the north and south ends of Lakeland. All of our providers rotate through the two offices.

Every effort will be made to schedule your child with the provider of your choice. However, in the event of an emergency medical situation or when prior commitments make this impossible, an appointment with another provider will be suggested to enable us to provide the highest degree of continuity in these situations. (Note: Since the North office only will be open on Saturday mornings, southside patients will be seen at the North office and since the South office only will be open on Sundays, northside patients will be seen at the South office).

If you anticipate that a particular problem will require extra time to evaluate, please let us know when you make the appointment. (Common examples of this would be behavioral problems, chronic headaches, or abdominal pain.)

We realize that for unexpected reasons you may be unable to keep an appointment. We simply request the courtesy of a phone call to cancel the appointment at least one hour in advance since unkept appointments prevent us from efficiently providing care to our patients. If you do not call us at least one hour before to cancel the scheduled appointment on three separate occasions in an 18 month period you may be dismissed from the practice.

OFFICE VISITS AND AUTHORIZATION TO TREAT

When possible it is best that a parent or legal guardian accompany your child to the office. We REQUIRE that a parent or legal guardian accompany the child on the first visit to the practice since a complete medical history must be obtained. We also feel that this is especially important at the preventive care visits (well baby checks) since we cover many issues and problems which the parents would be best able to discuss.

However, we realize that circumstances sometime prevent your attendance. Our office can provide you with an “Authorization to Treat” form which will allow you to specify those individuals whom you empower to make medical decisions in your absence. Please be aware that in NO circumstances, except for a true medical emergency, can we legally treat your child in your absence without such an authorization.

AFTER HOURS

If your child becomes acutely ill or an emergency arises after office hours, the provider on-call may be reached through our office numbers, 863-688-3550 or 863-619-8441. We provide this 24 hour coverage year round as a service to our patients, but would deeply appreciate your consideration to reserving after hours calls to urgent medical problems. **ALL NON-URGENT PROBLEMS, ROUTINE ADVICE, PRESCRIPTION REFILLS, ETC. WILL ONLY BE HANDLED DURING OFFICE HOURS.** Please remember our providers have their own families who need their time also. If the matter is urgent, please do not hesitate to call us.

TELEPHONE CONSULTATION

Please call our office during working hours for appointments and advice. Our staff is specially trained and under our direct supervision to enable them to help you with most of the usual problems and relay our recommendations. This allows the providers to spend more time in direct patient care and ensure the quality of your own office visit will not be affected by an excessive load of the scope of our staff or a matter warrants personal communication, we will definitely contact you as soon as our schedule permits. Remember that it is in your child's best interest if there is uncertainty concerning their condition they be examined at the office rather than attempting over the phone diagnosis and treatment. If your child is sick and needs to be seen, especially during the weekends, please call as early as possible so timely arrangements can be made.

PAYMENT AND HEALTH INSURANCE

Except for the circumstances described below, we require payment at the time of services. This can be by cash, check, or credit card (American Express, Mastercard or Visa). In selected cases according to needs, a payment schedule can be arranged prior to the appointment.

For patients covered by a managed care health insurance plan, with which we have a contract (such as an HMO, PPO, PSO), your payment of office fees will be according to your individual plan/contract. Please be aware that most plans forbid us to defer collection of co-payments, co-insurances and deductibles. These must be paid at the time of services. Also, it is the patient's responsibility to demonstrate that a deductible has been met; time constraints prevent us from determining this by phone call at the time of checkout. Please bring a statement or proof of having met the deductible. For patients covered by a health plan which has not contracted directly with us, we will file your insurance for hospitalizations only. For office services, we require full payment at the regular office visit fee amounts at the time of services. An itemized receipt which you can submit to your insurance company for reimbursement will be provided.

In all cases please contact your insurer if you have specific questions regarding your health insurance policy.

We thank you for the privilege of working with you in providing your children with the quality health care they require and deserve.