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FOR OUR NEW PATIENTS

WELCOME

We - Drs. Shepherd, Lopez, and Prasad - are Pediatricians, specialists in the care of children from birth to age 21. We are pleased that you have come to us for the care of your children. We have what is called a Common Practice. That is, we jointly take care of the children in our practice. You will see each of us from time to time. This approach lets us know and understand your children. You, in turn, know and can talk to each of us freely. In this way we can provide care 24 hours a day for your children by a doctor known to both you and your children.

OUR GOAL

Our goal is to give your children the best possible health care. Our practice is built on mutual trust. If, in the course of your visits, you have any questions or concerns, always feel free to talk with us. In this way we can better help your children grow up healthy and happy. We look forward to time with you and your family.

OFFICE HOURS

The office is open from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday. We are closed from 12:00 P.M. to 1:00 P.M. for lunch. Office staff is available to answer the telephone beginning at 8:00 A.M. The office is open Saturdays from 9:00 A.M. to Noon for children who are ill. Weight checks can be done from 9 – 11 A.M. or 1 – 4 P.M. M – F. Weight checks can also be done on Saturdays from 9 – 11 A.M. We ask that you please call ahead so we may have your child's chart ready.

APPOINTMENTS

When your child needs to be seen by one of the doctors, please call the office to set up an appointment. You may be asked to come immediately if your child is injured or ill. **If you find that you cannot keep an appointment, please call the office to cancel or to reschedule.**

CONTACTING THE DOCTOR

If you wish to speak to one of us during office hours, please call the office and the receptionist will take your telephone number and we will return your call as soon as possible.

After office hours or on the weekend you may reach the physician on call by calling the office at 534-9230 to find out who is on call as well as the phone number. One doctor is on call at all times so you will always be able to reach one of us. If you think your child may need to be seen in the hospital emergency room, please telephone the doctor on call before going to the emergency room.

CHILD CARE INSURANCE

As your partner in health care, we are happy to provide you with basic billing information and answers to commonly asked questions about clinic bills. Our goal is to do everything we can to help minimize the financial burden you may encounter due to medical services you receive at our office. Please don't hesitate to call us with any of your billing questions. Becoming knowledgeable about your insurance coverage can be a key to avoiding unexpected bills for medical care received.

HEALTH INSURANCE TIPS

Check with your insurance company to find out your specific coverage. Most health insurance companies will pay for the medical services provided at our office. The amount of payment, if any, will depend upon your specific insurance policy. Because there are so many types of insurance plans, it is difficult for us to tell you specifically what your insurance plan will pay. Many plans have amounts you will have to pay, such as deductible, coinsurance, and coverage limits.

- A deductible is an annual dollar amount that you have to pay before the insurance makes any payment.
- Coinsurance, sometimes referred to as copay, is a percentage or set amount of the bill that you are responsible to pay. Most insurance will not pay 100% of your medical bill. Some companies require copay or coinsurance payment for some services.
- Coverage limits can involve a variety of areas ranging from no payment being made provided for specific services to only paying up to a certain dollar amount per year.
- Insurance companies cover some services, such as those for behavioral and mental health problems, differently than medical illnesses.

FILING INSURANCE

We will bill your insurance company based on information you supply. We need a valid insurance card complete with the address used to submit claims. Always bring your insurance card with you for office visits. If you cannot supply us with valid or current information, you will be asked to pay for your visit that day. You are fully responsible for what the insurance company does not cover.



PEDIATRIC INSURANCE ISSUES

Each specific insurance policy has its own coverage limits for these services. It is important that you contact your insurance company to find out just what is covered. Most insurance policies cover a set cost for these services per year. Some insurance policies cover some immunizations or none at all. If your insurance policy covers no immunizations, or if immunization cost is included in a yearly coverage limit for well baby care, talk to us about the community immunization clinics that provide free immunizations. It is your responsibility to know your coverage limitations.

PAYMENT FROM INSURANCE

When your insurance company makes a payment, they will provide a form to you called the Explanation of Benefits (EOB). This is a summary explaining what action your insurance company took for a specific date of service. You will receive a monthly statement from our office until the entire amount has been paid. If your insurance has not paid for a visit within 60 days, please contact them. Keep a record of the time and the person to whom you spoke at the insurance company. This is especially helpful if we need to resubmit a claim for your medical bill.

PAYMENT

At the time a new patient intake is filled out you will fill in a guarantor on the account. A guarantor is one that makes or gives a guarantee. In other words, whoever is responsible for the bill will sign as the guarantor. You will also sign a form authorizing us to file your insurance and to have insurance payments sent to us. We cannot send statements to both father and mother at two different addresses.

It is our office policy that services are paid for at the time the service is provided. If you have insurance that will cover your visit, our staff will file the appropriate forms. Co-pays will be collected at the time of each visit. Our office will accept cash, personal checks, and Visa or MasterCard credit cards. Statements are sent at the end of each month for outstanding balances after the insurance company has paid or denied the claims. Payment in full is expected by the statement due date after you receive your statement. We require payment of 20% of the balance due each month. If this is a problem, please discuss alternate methods of payment with our office manager.