

## North Raleigh Pediatric Group

### *Newsletter*

*Fall 2008*

See us at [www.northraleighpediatrics.com](http://www.northraleighpediatrics.com)

We have had a busy summer at North Raleigh Pediatrics. Thank you for trusting us with your physicals, this year's new vaccines and indications, and those pesky rashes and viruses of summer. Thank you also to the families that participated in our annual program to provide medical care to 16 of the Children of Chernobyl who traveled to north Raleigh for the summer.

Welcome back to our on-line newsletter. Again, copies of this Newsletter are available on our website, by email and at the office. If you wish to receive an email copy, you may provide us with your email address through our website prompt or during your next visit to our office. We are happy to keep you up to date with news at North Raleigh Pediatrics.

#### **AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE:**

New Patient Initial History Questionnaire  
New Patient Registration Forms  
HIPAA forms  
Wake County Sports forms for Middle School  
Wake County Sports forms for High School  
Wake County Medication Request Forms

Please periodically check with our website for new and updated information regarding your child's health.

## **FLUMIST AND FLU CLINICS**

We will soon receive our first shipment of FluMist. FluMist is the live-attenuated nasal vaccine that is now approved for healthy patients as young as 2 years of age. The vaccine is well tolerated, up to 50% more effective than the injection, and is thought to provide immunity for up to one year. As with Fluzone, any child under the age of 9 who has never received influenza vaccine will require two doses of FluMist. Once received, FluMist will be immediately available to qualified children during well-child exams. FluMist will also be available at Flu Clinic.

By mid-September, we will post Flu Clinic hours and information on this website.

## **ADHD MEDS AND CARDIAC RISK**

In April, the American Heart Association (AHA) released a new statement that advocated screening children for cardiac conditions before and during treatment with stimulant drugs for ADHD. The AHA statement recommended that each child diagnosed with ADHD be given an electrocardiogram before these drugs are prescribed.

It is standard of care to routinely screen pediatric patients for heart health as part of preventive pediatric care, and those with certain symptoms are referred for further evaluation as appropriate.

After careful review of the science behind these new recommendations, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) in May determined that it is unnecessary to change the current ADHD guidelines. Routine EKGs prior to beginning stimulant medication is unnecessary.

## **PRACTICE NEWS**

**EMR “Go Live”.** If you have been in the office since June, you have noticed that the nurses and docs are all using small tablets as part of our new electronic medical record system. We assure you that your child’s paper chart is now part of the new EMR and fully accessible. As we feel that correct documentation of immunizations is critical, we are still asking you to sign for each of your child’s immunizations. This helps us to verify our documentation. Our EMR system also allows us to “eprescribe” your child’s medications to your preferred pharmacy. Remember to leave us this information when you leave a voicemail message with the nurses. Remember that controlled substances can not be eprescribed.

**Office Procedures.** When you make an appointment, you will be given a physician appt time as well as a check-in time. Please help us to update your child's contact and insurance information by arriving at your check-in time. If you are scheduled for a Physical, there are also patient questions and labs that must be completed before the doctor's appt time. Please always sign in so that our staff can provide you with all paperwork necessary to complete your visit and ensure proper filing of your insurance claim.

As always, if you are not called within 15 minutes please check back with the front to be sure your child's chart has been processed. We are contracted with a wide variety of insurance companies and therefore required to scan your card at each visit. This assures proper and timely payment.

**Our Weekend Hours.** On **Saturday** and **Sunday** our phone lines are open from 8:30 to 11:00 AM. These appointments are scheduled for "same day" acute sick and/or injured. Our weekend staff is only able to schedule for Saturday and/or Sunday and cannot schedule appointments for regular business days. Please contact us Monday through Friday 8:30-5:30 for standard office business.

**Nurses On-Call.** We are also pleased to announce that we have changed our after-hours call service. Nurses On-Call provides you with direct access to a trained triage nurse who uses AAP-approved phone advice. We are pleased with the promptness of response and the quality of advice. We remind you that the doctor on-call is still readily available at your request or by the advice of the triage nurse. After-hours triage calls are billed at \$10.

**Well Visit Reminder Postcards.** If your child has not had a well-child exam for two years, you have probably received a reminder postcard. School age children need regular well visits for preventive counseling and immunization updates.

As the emergency and urgent care services get busier this fall and winter, we remind you that we can be available after hours for simple stitches. You may ask the answering service to page us directly to discuss treatment of a simple laceration. If we determine that we can perform a simple procedure safely in our office, we will meet you. An office visit can be more convenient, less time consuming, more familiar to your child and a lot less

expensive. Under some conditions, however, it may best for your child to be seen in an emergency department.

## **COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

Look for us in Carolina Parent magazine and especially in their “New Baby” fall edition.

## **BILLING AND INSURANCE**

As a service to our parents, we are contracted and file with a variety of insurance companies. All coverage varies from plan to plan even within the same insurance company. Please check your policy regarding coverage and co-pays and co-insurance.

Our staff is instructed to ask for your current insurance card at each visit. If you do not have a current card you will be expected to pay in full at the time of service. Our billing system requires verification of all insurance and demographic information at the time of service. Many times insurance coverage changes month to month depending on family circumstances. We must have your most recent insurance card on file to avoid claim denials and unnecessary billing issues for our parents. Our Raleigh billing number is 919-851-2174.

If you come for an annual physical for preventive care and your physician has identified an additional medical or behavioral issue that needs to be addressed, you may see two charges on the same date of service (one charge for the preventive care and the other charge for addressing the additional medical issue.) You may have to fulfill co-payment, deductible, and/or co-insurance requirements that may be assessed by your insurance carrier. This billing policy has been implemented as a convenience for our patients so that they do not have to return for subsequent visits.

Some procedures are considered “surgical” by insurance carriers. These include but are not limited to:

- \*\*Wart removal (regardless of method)
- \*\*Ear wax removal (regardless of method)
- \*\*Stitches

Insurance may apply separate deductibles for procedure visits.

ADD/ADHD. Please check with your insurance carrier for these diagnoses as they may need to be filed differently or they may require that your child see a specialist rather than their primary care physician. Initial evaluations may not be covered, but medication management and follow-up visits are usually covered.

Unfortunately, it is impossible for us to know your insurance benefits, please check with your insurance carrier if you have questions regarding benefits, deductibles, co-insurances and co-pays.

Cancellations and No Shows. Any cancellation or No Show within 24 hours of an appointment time is subject to a \$35 charge.

Thank you for choosing North Raleigh Pediatric Group for your children's healthcare needs. We are glad to provide you with the highest quality care possible.