

Welcome to Advocare Gloucester County Pediatrics!

Our team of doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, and staff is specially trained in the care of newborns, infants, children, and adolescents. Our nurse practitioners are registered nurses with advanced education and clinical training in pediatrics. Working closely with the doctors, they perform physical exams, treat sick children, prescribe medications, and order tests.

We maintain a tradition of personalized care that spans over 50 years. You have the option of arranging office visits so that each of our doctors and nurse practitioners sees your child. Or if you prefer, you may select a particular doctor or nurse practitioner for the majority of your child's examinations.

Appointments

All patients are seen by appointment. We will schedule your child's office visit at a time that is convenient for you. Please try to plan routine checkups as far in advance as possible, especially for evening and Saturday morning appointments. We generally see our sick children the same day that the parent calls, however, this may not be possible during extremely busy winter periods of widespread illness and flu epidemic.

While we do our best to respect the appointment schedule, our primary focus is to give each child the time that he or she needs and deserves. During your visit, we address the most important issue which may necessitate one or more follow-up visits for multiple or secondary concerns. Being on time for appointments and not asking that additional children be seen when only one is scheduled helps us keep on time. However, if you have a second child who is very sick, please let the front desk know. You may be charged an extra fee if an unscheduled additional child is seen.

We appreciate your understanding should our doctors occasionally be delayed by a call to the emergency room or to the labor and delivery room. Our front desk will try to notify you in advance of the delay and make any changes to accommodate your needs, including rescheduling. Please be sure that our office has your current home telephone number, cell phone number, and home address.

Routine Checkups/Vaccines

Yearly checkups are required. Immunizations are scheduled based on age and follow the American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines. In accordance with current recommendations, the vaccine schedule is as follows:

Age	Immunizations/Test
Birth	Hepatitis B #1
1 Month	Hepatitis B #2
2 Months	DTaP, Hib, IPV/Pentacel; Prevnar; Rota Teq
4 Months	DTaP, Hib, IPV/Pentacel; Prevnar; Rota Teq
6 Months	DTaP, Hib, IPV/Pentacel; Prevnar; Rota Teq
8 Months	Hepatitis B #3 (IPV #3 if needed)
12 Months	Varivax #1; Hib #4
15 Months	MMR #1; Hib #4
18 Months	DTaP #4; Hepatitis A #2; MCHAT
24 Months	Any deficient vaccination(s); MCHAT
30 Months	Any deficient vaccination(s); MCHAT
3 Years	Any deficient vaccination(s)
4 Years	MMR #2; IPV #4
5 Years	Dtap #5; Varivax #2; Hearing and vision screening
6 to 10 Years	Any deficient vaccination(s) Hearing and vision screening
11 Years	Tdap; Menactra #1; GARDASIL Hearing and vision screening
13 Years	Varivax (2 doses at least one month apart if not already immunized); Hearing and vision screening
14 Years and older	Deficient vaccines; Hearing and vision screening; Mantoux (TB test)
16 to 18 Years	Menactra #2

Immunization/Test	Definition
RotaTeq	Rotavirus Vaccine
DTaP	Diphtheria, Tetanus; aCellular Pertusis
IPV	Inactivated (killed) Polio Vaccine
Hib	Haemophilus Influenza Type B
MMR	Mumps, Measles, Rubella
Tdap	Adult form of Dtap (required at age 11 years or prior to start of 6th grade)
Varivax	Chicken Pox
Influenza	The "flu shot" is recommended in patients 7 months of age and older especially in patients with lung, heart disease, or other chronic illnesses. Required annually of all 6 to 59 month old children attending daycare or preschool facilities.
Prevnar	Vaccine against Strep Pneumonia which can case pneumonia/meningitis.
Menactra	Meningococcal Meningitis Vaccine (required at age 11 years or prior to the start of 6th grade).
GARDASIL	Human Paillomavirus Vaccine
MCHAT	Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers

As new vaccine development proceeds at a rapid pace, we explain updates on various options during your visit and are glad to discuss any concerns you may have. In addition, we encourage you to access these reputable sources about vaccines: www.vaccine.chop.edu and www.cdc.gov/nip/vacsafe. Our office follows the American Academy of Pediatrics vaccine schedule, and we expect that all children in our care will be fully immunized in a timely manner.

Although many visits are scheduled for the first two years, they become less frequent in the future. Nevertheless, even older patients require routine checkups on a yearly basis in addition to sick visits. This allows us to focus on issues involving physical as well as intellectual growth and development. Routine visits enable you to voice concerns about your child's health and allow us to ask questions to better understand your child's needs. Patients receiving immunizations elsewhere are still required to adhere to the age appropriate routine examination schedule. This provides parents with the opportunity to ask questions and enables our office to update your child's medical record.

Parents, Siblings, and Cell Phones

Both parents are welcome to attend their baby's checkups. However, siblings running around in the exam room distract the parents as well as the doctor. Parents often have difficulty remembering which questions to ask while trying to control other children. Therefore, please consider bringing along a second adult with two or more younger children. Cell phones are also a major distraction during the examination. Please set your cell phone to vibrate mode if you must have it on.

After Hours, Sundays, and Holiday Coverage

Our practice offers 24/7 coverage. If a problem arises that can wait until the office reopens, please call during regular office hours. For issues that cannot wait, one of our physicians is always on call. When the office is closed, we monitor incoming calls using an answering service. When dialing our main telephone number, you will hear a series of prompts. For life-threatening emergencies, please hang up and dial 911. For non-life-threatening emergencies, press "0" and an operator will take your information and contact us immediately. Please keep your phone line free and remember to reserve this service for truly serious problems or emergencies. For non-urgent calls, press "1" and leave your name, phone number where you may be reached, the age of the child, and a brief description of the problem. Please have your pharmacy's telephone number available as well. If your call is not answered within one to two hours, please call back, press "0," and notify the answering service operator, who will contact the doctor on call. Please inactivate caller ID in order to receive a return phone call.

Hospital and Emergency Room Evaluations

When your child is very ill, we may conduct the examination in our office if appropriate. However, we may recommend that you take your child to an emergency room if blood tests, X-rays, oxygen, or specialized care is needed. We send patients to any one of the Delaware Valley's four children's hospitals: The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children, the Children's Regional Hospital at Cooper University Hospital, and St. Christopher's Hospital for Children.

Many managed care insurance companies require contacting your primary care provider before going to the emergency room. If you believe the situation is life-threatening, please call 911 or take your child directly to the emergency room, preferably a pediatric facility. After your child has been evaluated, stabilized, or treated, have the emergency room doctor contact our office or the doctor on call to discuss the situation and formulate a plan. You are responsible for notifying your health insurance carrier as soon as possible. Please check with your insurance representative regarding the requirements of your individual policy.

Prescriptions/Dispensing Medications

Many pediatric practices consider it medically inappropriate and even dangerous to prescribe medication without first examining the child. Our physicians and nurse practitioners try to adhere to this policy, especially during office hours. When our office is closed, a medication may be prescribed over the phone. However, a follow-up visit is always required.

During regularly scheduled office hours, our doctors use computers to electronically transmit prescription medical information to the patient's pharmacy. Therefore, a written prescription will not be given to the patient or parent. Please call the pharmacy in approximately one half hour to check the completion status of the prescribed medication. This convenience eliminates the necessity of having to drop off the prescription.

During the winter months or times of flu epidemics, pharmacists are often very busy. It is not uncommon to be placed on hold for several minutes. When calling our office for a prescription renewal, have the pharmacy's telephone number available. If we are unable to reach the pharmacy, you may be instructed to request that the pharmacist contact us instead.

Medical Students, Medical Residents, and Nurse Practitioner Students

Teaching others is the best way to remain up-to-date on pediatric advancements and improve skills. In addition to being certified instructors in both Neonatal and Pediatric Advanced Life Support for area hospitals, our doctors participate in the instruction of nurses enrolled at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, as well as medical students and residents. With your permission and after proper introduction, these young professionals will examine your child prior to the checkup. The problem, exam, and treatment will then be discussed for the benefit of all.

Medical Records, Health and Physical Forms, And Vaccine Records

Submit health forms for school, sports, or work to the office for completion, provided that the child has been examined within the last year and vaccinations are up-to-date. Otherwise, a checkup and the appropriate vaccination(s) will be required. Please allow at least one week for forms to be completed. Note that we charge a fee for completing these forms. Medical records requests are also subject to a processing fee.

Referrals and Pre-certifications

Many managed care insurance plans require referrals for the patient to be evaluated by a specialist, which are usually generated electronically. Hard copy referrals are not issued on short notice, and may require 24 to 72 hours for processing. In similar fashion, many health insurance plans also require precertification before performing certain tests. This review process often takes 24 to 72 hours as well. To provide us with adequate time to prepare your referral, please call our office at least 48 hours prior to your appointment with the specialist.