



## Welcome to Peds & Parents Family Care, LLC

124 Andrews Way, Suite B St. Marys, Georgia 31558  
Tel: (912)729-7007 FAX: (912)729-3627  
Visit us online: [www.pedsnparentsfamilycare.com](http://www.pedsnparentsfamilycare.com)

We are so thankful you have chosen to entrust *Peds & Parents Family Care, LLC*, with the primary care of you and your family. Your wellbeing is truly our number one priority and we pledge to you quality care from our knowledgeable and caring providers. Our team is comprised of Boards Certified Practitioners including Family Physicians, Family Nurse Practitioners. Our providers are ready to partner with you in your pursuit of healthy living.

We ask that you take this time to read our patient policies in full. To prevent any misunderstandings, please speak with a member of our staff if you need clarification on our policies. Your understanding of these policies is critical to a mutually rewarding relationship with our practice.

Additionally, we have enclosed a "New Patient Application & Registration" which includes a "Medical History" questionnaire for your completion and return. If you are applying on behalf of a minor, please also complete the supplemental "Additional Registration Information for Pediatric Patients" and the "Medical History for Pediatric Patients" questionnaire. A provider will then review your information and determine whether your needs can be met. Once a provider approves your new patient packet, you will be contacted to schedule your first appointment.

Once again, thank you for choosing Peds & Parents Family Care. To learn more about us, please visit us online at [www.pedsnparentsfamilycare.com](http://www.pedsnparentsfamilycare.com) and "Like" us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/pedsnparents](http://www.facebook.com/pedsnparents). If you have any questions, a member of our team will be happy to speak with you. We look forward to providing quality care to you and your family.

Partnering with you,

**Peds & Parents Family Care**



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## Patient Policy Overview

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**New Patients** - Before your first appointment will be scheduled, you must complete and return the New Patient Packet for evaluation. A provider will review your information and determine whether your needs can be met. Also, if your insurance provider requires prior approval before the first appointment, please allow adequate time for document review and transfer of care. Once a provider approves your New Patient Packet, you will be contacted to schedule your first appointment.

**Office Hours** - Our office is open Monday through Friday 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM and 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM.

**Scheduled Appointments** - Please arrive 15 minutes prior to all appointments with your current insurance card(s), driver's license, and all current medications. To ensure our records are accurate, you will be required to sign in with your name, address, and telephone number at each visit. To minimize wait times, you will be seen by the next available provider. If you are more than 15 minutes late, you may be required to reschedule for another time. We are truly concerned with your wellbeing and place a great priority on ensuring you receive the appropriate follow-up care and regular well checks. It is for that reason that we ask you to schedule your next visit prior to departing.

**Cancelled and Missed Appointments** - We have a very large number of patients and do our best to provide care to those in need. When you miss your scheduled appointment time without providing proper notification, it prevents another patient from being seen during that time. If you are unable to keep your appointment, it is very important that you call our office 1 business day or 24 hours, whichever is greater, in advance so that someone else may be given that appointment time. If you fail to provide proper notification, including same-day cancellations, you may be assessed a \$35.00 missed appointment fee as permitted by our contract with your insurance carrier.

If you and/or your family members accumulate 3 or more missed appointments in any 12 month period, you and your family members you will no longer have the privilege of reserving appointment times in advance. Instead, you will have to call the day you/they need to be seen. Our staff will review the schedule for the day and evaluate if the patient can be worked into the schedule. If you are advised that you may be worked into the schedule, you still will not have an appointment set, but may come in at the advised time and wait until the provider is available to see you. If you continue to miss appointments, your family may regretfully be dismissed from our practice as failure to attend appointments demonstrates noncompliance to follow a provider's care plan.

**Prescription Refills** - In general, you are provided with enough refills to sustain you until you need to be seen by a provider for a follow-up. Prior to running out of your medications, please contact us to see if you need to schedule a medcheck appointment. If you are not due for an appointment, please contact your pharmacy at least one week prior to running out of your prescription to request a refill. If you have to call our office for a refill request, please allow **one week** for refill requests.

**Phone Calls and Messages** - Please feel free to contact our office during our regular business hours. Our front office team is happy to schedule your appointments, answer general office questions, and take messages for any clinical questions you may have. While priority is given to care of scheduled patients that are in the office, as time permits your call will be returned. Although our providers do not return phone calls to answer general medical questions, your call will be returned by another member of our team on their behalf. Providers are notified of messages and medical questions at 11:30 AM and 4:30 PM.

**On Call Staff** - As a service to you, we have a member of our team available to receive calls after clinical hours to answer non-emergent questions via telephone. However, evaluation and treatment of illness is not provided over the telephone. Problems are typically referred to the emergency department, an urgent care facility, or

## Peds & Parents Family Care: Patient Policy Overview

our office. Please note that we do not call in prescription refills or schedule appointments after office hours. If you need medication for a life threatening illnesses and our office is not open, please seek medical attention from the emergency department or an urgent care facility.

**Immunizations** - Vaccinating children and young adults may be the most important health-promoting intervention that is performed by health care providers. Because vaccines are effective at preventing serious illnesses and saving lives, it is our policy to vaccinate and immunize all children that are cared for at our facility. Due to the serious health hazards of not vaccinating children, if you (parent/guardian) at any time choose to not vaccinate your child, we will request that you seek care from another clinic.

**Requests for Medical Records** - At any time you may request a copy of your medical records. Georgia state law allows medical offices to charge anyone requesting records. The rates charged are set by the state of Georgia and the consumer price index for the medical industry. To receive your records your patient account(s) must be current and the fees for your records must be paid in full before delivery.

**Requests for Documentation Completion** - There may be times when you need an accident, disability, or work-related form completed. Because appointments are not typically scheduled for documentation completion, you will be charged for this service to compensate for the time required to complete the form for you. This amount is to be paid at the time the form is taken.

**Payment** - Please review our payment policy carefully, and feel free to ask us any questions you may have about payments and insurance filing. **Please note that payment is required at the time services are rendered.**

- 1. Insurance** - We participate in most insurance plans, including Medicaid. As a service to you, we are happy to file your insurance for your visits with us. If you are not insured by a plan with which we have a contract, **payment in full** is expected at each visit. If you are insured by a plan we do have a contract with, but don't have an **up-to-date** insurance card, payment in full for each visit is required until we can verify your coverage. **Knowing your insurance benefits is your responsibility.** Please contact your insurance company with any questions you may have regarding your coverage prior to your visit.
- 2. Co-payments** - All co-payments must be paid prior to you being seen by a provider or receiving any service. **This arrangement is part of your contract with your insurance company.** Failure on our part to collect co-payments from patients is a violation of our contracts. We do not accept post-dated checks for any reason.
- 3. Non-covered services** - Please be aware that some – and perhaps all – of the services you receive may not be covered, not considered reasonable, or necessary by some insurers. You must pay for these services in full at the time of visit.
- 4. Proof of insurance** - All patients must complete our patient information form before seeing the provider. We must obtain a copy of your driver's license and current valid insurance to provide proof of insurance. If you fail to provide us with the correct insurance information, you will be responsible for payment at the time of service.
- 5. Claims submission** - As a courtesy and service to you, we will submit your claims to your insurance company on your behalf. However, your insurance company may require you to supply certain information directly to them, and it is your responsibility to comply with their request. **Please also be aware that you are responsible for any portion of your bill not paid by your insurance company** unless mandated otherwise in our contract with the insurance company.
- 6. Coverage changes** - If your insurance changes, please notify us **before your next visit** so we can make the appropriate changes to help you receive your maximum benefits.
- 7. Returned check charges** – If you issue a check to us and it is returned for insufficient funds, you are responsible for paying the amount plus a \$30.00 returned check fee in cash, credit, or debit card.
- 8. Nonpayment** - If your account is over 90 days past due, you will receive a letter stating that you have 20 days to pay your account in full. Partial payments will not be accepted unless otherwise negotiated. Please be aware that if a balance remains unpaid, we may refer your account to a collection agency and you and your immediate family members may be discharged from this practice. If this is to occur, you will be notified by certified mail that you have 30 days to find alternative medical care. During that 30-day period, we will only be able to treat you for urgent issues.



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## Vaccine Policy Statement

Vaccinating children and young adults may be the most important health-promoting intervention we perform as health care providers, and that you can perform as parents/caregivers. The recommended vaccines and their schedule given are the results of years and years of scientific study and data gathering on millions of children by thousands of our brightest scientists and physicians.

We advise you to vaccinate your child because we truly care about you and your family. No child should have to suffer from a preventable illness. We seek to educate you on the facts regarding vaccinations so you will understand the importance of choosing to vaccinate.

A thorough review of available literature, evidence, and current studies indicates that vaccines do not cause autism or other developmental disabilities. Thimerosal, a preservative that has been in vaccines for decades and remains in some vaccines, does not cause autism or other developmental disabilities.

We believe in the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and to save lives.

We believe in the safety of vaccines.

We believe that children and young adults should receive all of the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Having stated these beliefs, we recognize that there has always been and will always be controversy surrounding vaccination. Benjamin Franklin, persuaded by his brother, was opposed to smallpox vaccine until scientific data convinced him otherwise. Tragically, he had delayed inoculating his son Franky, who contracted smallpox and died at the age of 4, leaving Ben with a lifetime of guilt and remorse. Quoting Mr. Franklin's autobiography:

*"In 1736, I lost one of my sons, a fine boy of four years old, by the smallpox...I long regretted bitterly, and still regret that I had not given it to him by inoculation. This I mention for the sake of parents who omit that operation, on the supposition that they should never forgive themselves if a child died under it, my example showing that the regret may be the same either way, and that, therefore, the safer should be chosen."*

The vaccine campaign is a victim of its own success. It is because vaccines are so effective at preventing illness that we are even discussing whether or not they should be given. Because of vaccines, many of you have never seen a child with polio, tetanus, whooping cough, bacterial meningitis, or even chickenpox. You have not known a friend or family member

whose child died of one of these diseases. Such success can make us complacent and lazy about vaccinating. Such an attitude, if it becomes widespread, can only lead to tragic results.

By not vaccinating your child, you are relying on herd immunity which takes advantage of thousands of others who do vaccinate their children. In other words, because other children may be vaccinated, the likelihood of your child contracting one of these diseases decreases. That proves to be a very risky decision which may result in deadly consequences for your child.

Over the past several years, some parents in Europe chose not to vaccinate their children with the MMR vaccine after publication of an unfounded suspicion (later retracted) that the vaccine caused autism. As a result of under-immunization, there have been small outbreaks of measles and several deaths from complications of measles in Europe over the past several years.\*

We recognize that the choice to vaccinate may be a very emotional decision for some parents. We will do everything we can to educate you that vaccinating according to the schedule is the best thing you can do for your child. However, **should you have doubts, please discuss these with your health care provider in advance of your visit. Please be advised, however, that delaying or "breaking up the vaccines" to give one or two at a time over two or more visits goes against expert recommendations, and can put your child at risk for serious illness (or even death) and goes against our medical advice as providers at Peds & Parents Family Care, LLC. We do not "break up vaccines" for financial and moral reasons.**

Additional visits will require additional co-pays on your part. Furthermore, please realize that you will be required to sign a "Refusal to Vaccinate" acknowledgement in the event of lengthy delays.

If you should absolutely refuse to vaccinate your child despite all our efforts, we will ask you to find another health care provider who shares your views. We do not keep a list of such providers, nor would we recommend any such physician. Please recognize that by not vaccinating you are putting your child at unnecessary risk for life-threatening illness and disability, and even death.

As medical professionals, we feel very strongly that vaccinating children on schedule with currently available vaccines is absolutely the right thing to do for all children and young adults. Thank you for reading this policy. We encourage you to review the sources on the back of this page to further educate yourself on the safety and effectiveness of vaccines. If you have any questions, a member of our team would be happy to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

DR. FRED S. GIRTON, MD, FAAFP, MEDICAL DIRECTOR

ROBERT DAVENPORT-RAY, APRN, CEO

\*Koleva, G. (2012, July 7). What Recent Measles and Rubella Outbreaks in Europe Can Teach the U.S. Forbes. Retrieved August 5, 2013, from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/gerganakoleva/2012/07/02/what-recent-measles-and-rubella-outbreaks-in-europe-can-teach-the-u-s/>



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## Pediatric Well visit & Vaccination Schedule

Well-visits and immunizations play an important role in your child’s health. After the age of two, routine physical exams (well-visits) are recommended every year and are covered by most private and state insurance plans. These well-visits include measurements, screenings, development and behavioral assessments, a thorough physical exam, recommended immunizations, and anticipatory guidance to keep your child healthy. The schedule below lists the recommended immunization schedule that we adhere to. **If you decline to vaccinate your child according to the schedule below, we will ask you to find another health care provider.** An annual flu shot is also recommended for all children 6 months and older. We feel very strongly that vaccinating children on schedule with currently available vaccines is absolutely the right thing to do for all children and young adults. If you have any questions, a member of our team would be happy to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

Age	Recommended Immunizations	
Birth (in Hospital)	Hepatitis B	
2 Months	Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis HIB Polio	Hepatitis B Pneumococcal Rotavirus
4 Months	Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis HIB Polio	Hepatitis B Pneumococcal Rotavirus
6 Months	Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis HIB Polio	Hepatitis B Pneumococcal Rotavirus
9 Months	<i>Catch-up immunizations as needed</i>	
12 Months	Measles/Mumps/Rubella Varicella	Pneumococcal Hepatitis A
15 Months	Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis/HIB/Polio <i>Catch-up immunizations as needed</i>	
18 Months	Hepatitis A <i>Catch-up immunizations as needed</i>	
2 Years	Hepatitis A (catch-up if needed) <i>Catch-up immunizations as needed</i>	
3 Years	<i>Catch-up immunizations as needed</i>	
4-5 Years	Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis Polio Supplemental Pneumococcal if needed	Varicella Measles/Mumps/Rubella
6-10 Years	<i>Catch-up immunizations as needed</i>	
11-18 Years	Meningococcal (Initial vaccine at 11-12 years with booster after 4-5 years) Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis at 11-12 years Other immunizations as needed (Hep A, HPV)	



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## Additional Resources

- **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)**

[Aap.org/immunization](http://Aap.org/immunization)

The AAP is an organization of 60,000 primary care physicians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical subspecialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults.

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

[cdc.gov/vaccines](http://cdc.gov/vaccines)

The CDC is a government resource for vaccine safety.

- **Immunization Action Coalition (IAC)**

[immunize.org](http://immunize.org)

The IAC works to increase immunization rates and prevent disease by creating and distributing educational materials for health professionals and the public that enhance the delivery of safe and effective immunization services.

- **Every Child By Two (ECBT)**

[vaccinateyourbaby.org](http://vaccinateyourbaby.org) and [ecbt.org](http://ecbt.org)

Every Child By Two, founded by Rosalynn Carter and Betty Bumpers, is an organization devoted to raising awareness of the critical need for timely immunizations. ECBT's Vaccinate Your Baby web site is a one-stop shop for families with questions about vaccines.

- **Vaccine Education Center**

[vaccine.chop.edu](http://vaccine.chop.edu)

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's Vaccine Education Center provides complete and up-to-date information about vaccines to parents and health care professionals.

- **National Network for Immunization Information (NNii)**

[Immunizationinfo.org](http://Immunizationinfo.org)

NNii is a service provided by Immunizations for Public Health, a Texas-based nonprofit corporation dedicated to making immunization information available to those who need it.

- **Institute for Vaccine Safety**

[Vaccinesafety.edu](http://Vaccinesafety.edu)

The Institute for Vaccine Safety provides an independent assessment of vaccines and vaccine safety.

- **Parents of Kids with Infectious Diseases (PKIDs)**

[Pkids.org](http://Pkids.org)

PKIDs' mission is to educate the public about infectious diseases, the methods of prevention and transmission, the latest advances in medicine, and the elimination of social stigma borne by the infected.