



Newsletter



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Welcome to Stepping Stones!

I would like to say a warm hello to the established families of the practice and a very special hello to those who have joined SSP recently. The New Year is often viewed as an ideal time for new beginnings and I and the staff of the practice feel the same. With this in mind we are re-establishing our newsletter as a vehicle for communicating important new information and general information of interest. It is our goal to bring this to you quarterly. Please feel free to share your feedback with us as the year unfolds.

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New Immunizations

There are several new vaccines that have become available to you that are covered by most insurance plans. I have highlighted the main points about each vaccine below. I would encourage you to get more information about them from the American Academy of Pediatrics website. Information is also available at the National Network for Immunization Information (<http://www.immunizationinfo.org>) and the National Immunization Program (<http://www.cdc.gov/nip/default.htm>) websites.

Rotateq

A new live, oral vaccine that is targeted to children 6weeks old to 32 weeks of age. It protects against the intestinal illness caused by Rotavirus. The disease is most dangerous in younger age groups to which the vaccine is targeted. Most if not all children will have had the disease by 3yo. It is safe, painless and affords excellent coverage against the disease.

Tdap

This is the newest version to the older tetanus vaccine except that this one offers booster coverage for pertussis, a significant coughing illness that is on the rise partly because the protection from childhood vaccines does not seem to be holding for everyone in adulthood. This can be bad news not just for the person with the infection but for any infants or seniors that they may be in contact with. This vaccine will be given in place of the older Td booster starting at the 11y visit. It is also recommended that early boosting, (5yrs out from the old Td), should be done for kids who have already had the Td booster.

Gardasil

This is a vaccine to protect against the human papilloma virus, (HPV), infection which is the virus responsible for 99% of cervical cancer. It is recommended in girls as early as 11yo due to a better vaccine response when given at this age and because the exposure to the virus can begin within just a few years after. It is safe and effective and has the potential to greatly impact the medical quality of life for your daughter. Males are being considered for the vaccine but the final word on this is still out. There are 3 vaccines in the series.

Varicella

Were you aware that a second dose of this vaccine is now being recommended to assure life long immunity? Check your child's immunization record and make note of the number of vaccines. You may need to have a booster given at your child's next physical. A personal note/opinion..there may be some advantage to waiting to the early adolescent years for that 2nd shot so no need at tis time to rush in at this time.

Menactra

This vaccine protects against meningococcal disease including meningitis and meningococemia. The AAP recommends this vaccine for children 11-12yo. and high school freshman. The specificity of the ages relates to the likelihood of exposure and a desire to immunize before the highest risk times. It is not a mandated vaccine, however many colleges strongly recommend the vaccine for incoming freshman.

Hepatitis A

This vaccine has been around however its use has been limited primarily to high risk communities, (areas where the disease is most prevalent) or to people traveling to high risk areas around the world. In 2005 the recommendation was made for all children 12 months to 23 months receive the vaccine; not just those in high risk states/areas. This is still an optional vaccine in North Carolina. A decision to give this should be based on your understanding of the real risks your child may face.

There is no doubt that this is a lot of information so please take the time to research the topic and allow us to assist you if you have questions or concerns.

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New Staff

Norma Hazelwood - Practice Manager

Norma joined us in June of 2006. She has many years of experience and has worked in a variety of practice environments in several states. She lives in Louisburg with her husband. She has 2 daughters and 2 grandchildren who live in the area. Norma enjoys spending time with family and her hobbies include reading and long walks with her 2 beagles.

LuAnn Richardson., PNP

LuAnn has been with us for since February of 2006. She has worked 30 years in pediatrics including public health, private practice, research, and hospital settings. She is a Raleigh native and resides in North Raleigh with her husband. She enjoys time with her adult daughters and granddaughter as well as tennis, cello and kayaking.

Jane Hayes

Jane is the latest member of our front desk team. She resides in Wake Forest with her husband and enjoys sewing. She also enjoys spending time with her adult daughter.


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Old Staff

Just a brief line regarding Maria Ibach, PA. Maria recently gave birth to a healthy boy. She will be focusing her efforts on the home front as she takes on the challenges of raising 3 young ones. We wish her all the best.

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Hospital Coverage



I need to inform you of a new coverage arrangement for newborns. My neonatology colleagues have graciously agreed to cover the newborn infants of SSP born at Wake Med and Rex Healthcare. My decision to do this was based on the significant time required to commute to these facilities from the office. It is an arrangement that best meets the practical medical needs of the newborns and their parents; however, I will admit a sense of disappointment regarding the less tangible matter of joining with families in celebrating the safe delivery of a new family member.

Please feel free to call the office to alert us of the birth; it helps us to prepare for your first visit with us.

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Night & Weekend Coverage

Just a reminder that SSP has 24hr coverage provided for you. Our evening coverage system is in place to assist families with urgent medical needs. It is best to reserve routine questions for the daytime. **Also remember that a direct call to your pharmacy is the best and most efficient way to process medications refills requests.**

I currently share call with Sunrise Pediatrics and Coleman Pediatrics. The physicians in these groups are well known to me. We share similar philosophies regarding patient care and are committed to delivering this care in a caring and compassionate manner.

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