

# *LAKESHORE PEDIATRIC CENTER*

Patient and Family Handbook  
275 N Hwy 16 Ste 103  
Denver, NC 28037  
(704) 489-8401  
FAX (704) 489-8404

## OFFICE HOURS

M-F 8:00A-12:30P 1:30P-5:00P

OCT-MAR 9:00A – 11:00A on Saturdays

Please note our last appt is 4:15p with our last well check being at 3:30P

## WELCOME TO OUR PRACTICE

Lakeshore Pediatric Center provides medical care of children and young adults from birth to 21 years of age.

Lakeshore Pediatric Center provides:

- Highly skilled physician(s), nurse practitioner(s), medical assistants and support staff
- Education and empowerment of patient/caregivers to obtain and provide the best care possible
- Help with choosing and setting up appropriate referrals (medical appointments, procedures and testing) and providing appropriate background information
- Interpretation of subspecialty recommendation and coordination of care when multiple physicians and/or therapists are involved
- Evaluation, treatment and referral when indicated for mental health issues that may be the primary condition or the result of a serious medical condition
- Guidance and referral for family counseling
- Advocacy with insurers, government programs, schools and/or workplace if and when applicable
- Information on diagnosis, treatment and support services

## SCHEDULING APPOINTMENTS

To assure a convenient appointment time, we suggest that you contact our scheduling staff between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm weekdays at (704) 489-8401. If you must cancel an appointment, please call our office allowing at least 24 hours notice. We have a very busy clinic schedule and a missed appointment often prevents another patient from being seen. We will do our best to inform you of any changes in the schedule due to physician illness or vacation. There will always be a qualified physician on call. It may also be possible to see our Nurse Practitioner, who will be in communication with the physician on-call.

## OUR SERVICES

**CHECK-UPS (Preventive care):** Regularly scheduled check-ups are necessary to assess your child's general health including growth and development. The purpose of "preventive care" is to find problems before they become significant and to deal with them quickly and effectively. Appropriate immunizations are scheduled during the check-up. It is imperative that the child is accompanied to these appointments by a parent or legal guardian. If someone else brings the patient, they should have knowledge of all elements of the patient's status and care. We feel very strongly that maintaining the recommended schedule of check-ups is vital to providing quality medical care and thus it is office policy that our patients be seen for these exams. It is often difficult for us to accurately assess abnormalities found during an ill examination if we have not seen your child for regular well check-ups. Our schedule is often booked for these appointments 6-8 weeks in advance. Please use the schedule below as a guideline for determining minimal check-up visit frequency.

AGE	CHECK-UPS (if well)
0 – 6 months	at 6-8 week intervals
6 – 18 months	at 3 month intervals
2 years – 18 years	yearly

Children with chronic medical problems often require more frequent check-ups. We may not be able to refill prescriptions if the patient is not current with his/her check-ups.

**ILL VISITS:** Patients with acute problems will be scheduled by our staff according to the severity of their complaint on weekdays.

**RECHECK VISITS:** Some acute problems may require a follow-up visit, such as an ear infection recheck after 2-3 weeks to assure the infection is resolved.

**CONSULTATIONS:** An extended office visit to discuss more complex medical, developmental and/or behavioral issues may be scheduled per parent or physician request.

LABORATORY/PROCEDURES: Most testing will be ordered/scheduled through the community hospitals surrounding our office. These hospitals include but are not limited to: CMC-Lincoln, Presbyterian Hospital Huntersville, and Lake Norman Regional Medical Center

## WAITING TO BE SEEN

When signing in for a visit, please have the receptionist check with a staff member as to whether or not a urine or stool specimen is needed for the visit before using the restroom facility.

If you are on a tight schedule, we recommend that you call the office prior to coming in to inquire about delays. We will assist you in adjusting your schedule accordingly to minimize your wait.

Patients are seen according to their scheduled appointment time and severity of their problems, not according to arrival time. Check with the receptionist if you arrive late to see if your child's appointment is still available. If we are running "behind schedule" and your appointment has not been called, you will still be seen in order of the scheduled times. For patients arriving so late that their child has already been called back to be seen must be determined individually. The decision will be based on medical necessity of the visit and how busy the schedule is.

Occasionally, there are unexpected delays in the daily patient schedule. This is difficult to avoid because we cannot anticipate the time required for each check-up or ill visit. We truly regret any inconvenience this causes and have several suggestions that will minimize any possible wait.

Call one hour prior to your appointment (especially during winter afternoons) to inquire if we are "on time". If we are significantly late, we can adjust your appointment time to minimize your in-office waiting time. Likewise, please call ahead if you are running late for your appointment.

If you anticipate that you might want to have a second child examined along with the child who has an appointment, it is necessary to inform the office by phone before you come in so that we can set aside an additional amount of time. Many of our delays occur because parents ask questions about children other than the child scheduled. Bring formula, diapers, medications and any other necessary emergency equipment to assure continuity of daily care. One or two small toys or a book to amuse toddlers while waiting to see the doctor and/or nurse practitioner is helpful.

## BILLING POLICIES

Please remember that your insurance coverage is a contract between you and your insurance company. It is very important that you familiarize yourself with the details of your insurance coverage such as: covered and non-covered services; varying co-payments; etc. If your insurance company requires that you choose from a list of physicians, you are responsible for ensuring that our office or any physician we refer your child to is on your list. We recommend that you check with your insurance company to confirm that your list is current and accurate.

Each time you register for an office visit, please review the information sheet thoroughly for accuracy of name, address, phone numbers, emergency contacts and insurance information. Please bring all insurance cards and Medicaid cards with you at each visit. If your insurance requires that you are responsible for the co-pay, it needs to be paid upon check-in.

Billing is handled by our billing department, but we are available to help you with any questions or issues with bills.

## INSURANCE APPEALS

Our office can assist you with insurance appeals related to our care, special equipment, etc. In order for us to proceed with any appeal, you will need to provide us with a detailed copy of your insurance policy specific to the items being appealed. This will help us develop a strategy and give us leverage in the appeal process.

## TELEPHONE CALLS

When you need to call us, please have a pen and paper readily available, along with the phone number of an open pharmacy.

We will need to know:

- what medications and/or treatments your child is receiving (including those for chronic conditions such as asthma or diabetes) or has been on recently, as well as any drug allergies
- any chronic conditions and/or significant previous medical problems
- In case of a life-threatening emergency, call 911. Please try to contact our office after 911 has been called so that we may prepare the emergency room for your child's arrival and special needs.

## DAYTIME CALLS

All patients/families should call (704)489-8401. Our scheduler will take your name, phone and reason for the call. Our medical staff will triage calls to assist you with any questions or problems you might have during regular office hours by providing medical advice, phoning in prescriptions, and scheduling ill appointments when appropriate. We encourage patients/parents to speak to the medical assistants first. Try to call early in the day if you think your child might need an ill visit the same day. Occasionally our medical assistants, after consultation with our physicians, will suggest a treatment for a given problem and you will still prefer to have your child seen. Please do not hesitate to tell us that you prefer to have your child examined. We will be happy to accommodate your request. Unfortunately, we cannot always give you an appointment at the time you want, as we try to avoid overbooking the schedule and medical staff need to prioritize ill/emergency calls. Please call the office back if you have to leave home before a call is returned and give alternative phone number if necessary.

Calls regarding laboratory results, refills and routine concerns should be made during office hours when our staff has access to your child's record. Please check with the physician or staff as to when your child's test results will be available. If you have not heard from us within the time noted, do not assume that the test result is normal; please call us and check with the staff. Calls requiring physician attention are subject to the availability of the physician, as he or she may be tied up with other patient care.

If your child needs a refill for a medication that he/she takes on a regular basis, please do not wait until the bottle is empty before calling. Call during office hours and allow several days to a week in advance. Prescription refills are usually called in to the pharmacy by 4:00pm. If the medication is a "Schedule II" medication such as Adderall or Ritalin, the prescription will need to be picked up monthly, as these medications cannot be called in to the pharmacy. Please call **a week** ahead for the prescription.

## AFTER HOURS CALLS

All patients should call (877) 879-1213. Our answering service will take your name and phone number and contact the nurses on-call immediately. We answer every after-hours call and give priority to emergencies. We do request that after-hour calls be limited to those of genuine concern or emergency. Occasionally, we are unable to return a call in a timely manner. This may be due to a variety of reasons including: another medical crisis requiring our attention; incorrect phone number or other information conveyed by the answering service; or phone line or pager equipment malfunctions. If you have not received a return call in a reasonable length of time, it is best to call back and verify the information. If there continues to be difficulty in reaching the nurses on-call, please call (877)879-1213 and have the physician paged. If you are still unable to contact our physician or feel that you cannot wait for a call in the case of an emergency, we recommend calling or going to the nearest Emergency Room or call 911. Anytime you go to the Emergency Room, please call our office so our physician can communicate with the Emergency Room staff to maintain continuity of care.

## RELEASE OF MEDICAL INFORMATION

Lakeshore Pediatric Center is legally required by the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act to assure privacy with medical information. When there is a need to request medical records or having your physician speak to other care professionals, you will need to fill out an Authorization for Use and/or Disclosure of Protected Health Information Form. These forms are available for you to sign and keep in your child's medical chart when you register your child at his/her first office visit. There are separate forms for release of general medical information, release to schools and release of psychological notes.

## SCHOOL EXCUSE POLICY

We are only able to write a school excuse if we have seen your child or talked with you about your child's illness. School absences are considered necessary when your child is contagious or too ill to participate in school. Other things to consider are:

- Not all illnesses require your child being absent from school
- We can only give permission for your child to stay home if your child is contagious and/or too ill to participate in school
- If your child is being kept home from school because he/she is not willing to go, that needs to be addressed individually

## WEBSITE/RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Lakeshore Pediatric Center has a user friendly web-site. You can easily access our website at [www.lakeshorepediatric.com](http://www.lakeshorepediatric.com). The web-site provides comprehensive information in one convenient location for parents. These resources are helpful in the coordination of medical and psychosocial care for children with specialized chronic health care needs. Topics include advocacy, education, and more. We welcome your feedback about how to make the web-site more helpful.

## REFERRALS

At times, we may recommend consultation with a specialist physician or other health care professional. When doing so, we will follow the referral procedures outlined by your insurance plan. You should be aware, however, that many plans limit your choice of specialists and/or the amount of coverage available for certain types of referrals. You should also be aware that we cannot "back date" a non-emergency referral that you have initiated without consulting us; this would be a violation of the terms of our contract with your insurance company.

Patients and their parents are always free to seek a second opinion on their own initiative. While in most instances we will be happy to assist you, professional ethics do not allow us to make referrals which we believe are medically unnecessary.