

Well-Child Visit Schedule

Parents frequently ask us: When should my child have a physical? As with many things, the answer depends on whom you ask, and why. Different organizations will have different requirements. And we, as pediatricians, have our own recommendations based on our best medical advice.

The terms physical and check-up and well-child exam are pretty interchangeable. They are used to refer to visits where the focus is on growth and development, guidance on nutrition and safety and common childhood concerns, periodic recommended screenings for problems like anemia and scoliosis, and, of course, routine vaccinations. Minor problems or illnesses can often be addressed as well during these visits, but significant medical problems will often prevent us from performing the well-child exam during the allotted time. We advise patients with significant medical problems they wish to discuss to make separate appointments for this purpose, so that we can devote whatever time is necessary to the issue. If you are unsure, please talk to one of our staff ahead of time so that we can make sure you are given all the time you need.

Our recommended routine well-child exam schedule is as follows:

1-2 weeks	12 months
2 months	15 months
4 months	18 months
6 months	24 months
9 months	

After 2 years, we recommend annual physicals until the age of 18 years.

It is always worth remembering that this may be different from the requirements of schools or camps, but will typically be sufficient to complete most of these forms. However, as programs can have specific requirements which vary from our routines, we strongly recommend you present any forms you need completed at the start of your visit. We will do our best to complete them while you are there.

It may also be important to check your insurance coverage. While our recommendations are consistent with those from the American Academy of Pediatrics and most insurance plans, some plans have very specific allowances for routine well-child care which may differ in frequency or timing from our recommendations. Families are responsible for knowing their own plans.