



The Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics Encourages Families to Keep Child Wellness Visits and Routine Vaccinations

Chicago, IL– The Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (ICAAP) is encouraging families to maintain routine pediatric appointments during the COVID-19 pandemic and reach out to pediatricians for questions and support during this difficult time. In-person, routine well-child visits are still recommended for all children at this time, especially children under two who need to maintain their vaccination schedules.

“We are concerned that children and families are putting off routine and needed care for children,” said Mariana Glusman, MD, FAAP. “Risks of missing routine care and vaccines could lead to more problems in the future and we want our families to know that we are here to help them with both their physical and emotional needs during this unprecedented time.”

Pediatric practices have adjusted practices to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and families who access care. Practices in Illinois are adhering to CDC protocols such as keeping well visits and sick visits separate and many have started to provide telehealth visits via phone or video to best protect patients. They are using innovative strategies to continue to provide the best care for children which may include asking parents to wait in their car, limiting the number of adults in the room, and requiring everyone to wear a mask. While many non-essential procedures, surgeries, and visits were postponed in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, public health officials made it clear that those decisions were made to preserve personal protective equipment for health care professionals, NOT because hospitals or doctor’s offices are unsafe places to visit. Families should call their pediatrician to inquire about what their practice is doing during this time to accommodate well visits, vaccinations, and for any other concerns. Families should ask about how to travel safely to the office and other steps they can take to protect their family.

“It is really important for my child to see the doctor, even during COVID. I need to be able to get him checked out and get him care and not everything can be done over the phone” said a parent who recently visited her physician.

“The physicians in our state are working overtime to make their offices safe for families and develop innovative ways to reach families such as telemedicine”, said Alejandro Clavier, MD, MPH, FAAP. “We urge you to reach out to your pediatrician office to continue to access care and discuss your concerns.”

Routine visits to the pediatrician are not only an opportunity to receive immunizations but also to assess a child’s growth and development and provide support for families during this time. Many practices have also started providing visits via phone or video to reduce the time in the office. Parents are also encouraged to use telemedicine appointments with their child’s pediatrician to discuss sickness, mental health concerns like anxiety and depression or general questions. Pediatricians can assess during a telemedicine visit if an in-person visit is needed based on each child’s individual situation.

The Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (ICAAP) is a 501c3 organization whose mission is to promote and advocate for the optimal child, youth and family well-being, and access to quality healthcare while supporting our members

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