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Thank you for taking time to visit our office today. There are three pediatricians in our office: Dr. Graham Hall; Dr. Joshua Tardy; and myself, Dr. John Fitch. The office is divided into two halves with two separate receptionists and waiting areas.

Office Hours:

We see patients Monday-Friday from 8:00 AM - 12:00 Noon and 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM. I schedule newborn visits at 8:40 AM and 1:30 PM. In general, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays are better to schedule follow-up visits and non-acute sick visits, as Mondays and Fridays tend to be busier with acute sick patients.

Saturdays:

On Saturdays, our office is open for sick visits from 8:30 AM until we see the last patient. The three doctors rotate taking Saturday call. These are for acute sick visits. More chronic problems are best handled during the week when the child's regular doctor is in the office.

Phones:

Our phones are rolled over at 8:30 AM (8:00 on Saturdays). It is best to call early to schedule appointments. The phones are busy when we roll them over at 8:30 and we apologize for this. If you have a sick child, we will do everything we can to see your child that day, but again please call early. The phones are rolled over to the answering service between 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM and after 4:30 PM.

Answering Service:

Our answering service is through Methodist Hospital. When our phones are rolled over, you will here my voice. If you press 0 you will get an operator and you can have the doctor on call paged. If you press 1 you will get the Methodist nurse help line (22-NURSE). They do a wonderful job of answering questions. However, if the wait is too long or you would just like to speak to the doctor, myself, or one of my partners is always on call. If our phones don't get rolled over and you hear our "in office" voice message, you can call Methodist at 575-7000 and they will be able to page us or transfer you to the 22-Nurse line. We rotate our call between the 3 doctors during the week and rotate call each weekend. If it is after hours and you have a true life-threatening emergency, go to the closest Emergency Room. Otherwise call us, as we can often talk through things on the phone, direct you to one of the children's Emergency Rooms (and call ahead and let them know you are coming), or at times see you at the office.

Hospitals:

We have admitting privileges at Methodist Children's Hospital. If you are delivering at Methodist, and I am your pediatrician, just let the hospital know my name when you arrive. They will take care of calling me once the baby is born. I make my newborn hospital rounds between 6:00 AM and 7:00 AM every morning. The nurses call us if they have questions at other times. There are also neonatologists at the hospital if urgent issues arise. We see the baby every morning until the baby and mom are ready to go home. Babies admitted to the NICU (neonatal intensive care unit), will be seen by the neonatologists until the baby is either ready to go to the term nursery or is ready to be discharged. Please call me if you get admitted to the NICU so I can follow along with the hospital care as sometimes I don't get called about these admissions until you are ready to be discharged.



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If your baby is born at another hospital that we do not go to, the baby will be seen by one of the hospital's staff pediatricians. Call our office during office hours and let us know the baby has been born and schedule your newborn visits.

Newborn and Infant visits:

I like to see all first time babies in the office 2-3 days after you go home from whichever hospital. At this visit, I check the baby's weight, examine the baby, and answer any questions that you have. We then see the baby back at 2 weeks of age to do the second newborn screen and the first hepatitis B vaccine. The rest of the well visits in the first two years are as follows: 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, and 2 years. An immunization schedule is included in this folder. Please know that this schedule may change as new immunizations are introduced and recommendations are changed.

Hospitalization after the newborn period:

For infants and children who need to be admitted to the children's hospital outside of the newborn nursery, we work with a children's hospitalist group. These doctors only work in the hospital and they do a wonderful job of taking care of our patients while they are in-patients. Though I will not be writing the orders during the admissions, if I know you are admitted I will be following along closely with the hospitalization and talking to you while you are at Methodist. If you go to an Emergency Room without talking to us and then get admitted, please call our office to let us know. Sometimes we don't find out until after you are discharged

Childhood and Adolescents:

After the first two years, we like to see all patients for yearly visits. I see my responsibility as your doctor to not only treat the sore throats and earaches, but also to treat the whole person. This includes physical, emotional, social, and spiritual issues. These yearly visits give us a chance to do a thorough history and physical exam and to discuss these above issues. April, May, July and August can get very busy with check-ups, so call ahead and schedule appointments early.

Thank you for considering us for your child's care. If you have other questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

John T. Fitch, Jr., M.D.