



Thank you for taking time to visit our office today. There are four pediatricians in our office: Dr. John Gibson; Dr. Jon Crews; 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-Thursday from 8:00 AM - 12:00 Noon and 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM. On Fridays the office is only open from 8:00 AM – 12:00 Noon. The on-call doctor is in the office for sick visits on Friday afternoon from 1:30 PM until we see the last patient. I do schedule a few well visits on Friday afternoon when I am on call. 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 8:00 AM until we see the last patient. The four 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. I do schedule a few well visits on Saturday AM when I am on call.

#### Phones:

Our phones are rolled over at 8:00 AM. It is best to call early to schedule appointments. The phones are busy when we roll them over at 8:00 and we apologize for this. You can leave a message on our phone system. However, we only check these sporadically throughout the day. So, if you do desire a same day appointment, we encourage you to keep calling back. 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 Remedy Connect. When our phones are rolled over, you will hear 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 a Nurse Triage 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 directly into Remedy Connect at 303-715-6019. When you hear my voice, follow the above instructions. We rotate our call between the 4 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 a Pediatric Urgent Care (We prefer the continuity of care, but occasionally an UC is needed and significantly cheaper than an ER), or direct you to one of the children's Emergency Rooms (and call ahead and let them know you are coming).



#### Hospitals:

We have Associate Medical Status at Methodist Children's Hospital and Christus Children's Hospital of San Antonio (CHOSA). This means we can check on labs and imaging at these hospitals and can order labs at Kid's Express and Kids' Stop. We don't admit babies to the nursery or the hospital floor of either of these hospitals. We have a long relationship with Ultra Health Care at Methodist and they will admit all our newborns and inpatients at Methodist. Every other hospital has an on call Pediatrician who will admit newborns and hospitalized children. 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.

#### Newborn and Infant visits:

I like to see all first time babies in the office 2-3 days after you go home from the hospital. So, call our office during office hours and let us know the baby has been born and schedule your first newborn visit. 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. I do the 2<sup>nd</sup> newborn screen (PKU) at this 2 week visit. You do not need to go back to the hospital to do this screening test. I also do the 1<sup>st</sup> Hepatitis B shot at the 2 week visit. The baby's only risk of hepatitis B is from his / her mother. So, if the mother doesn't have hepatitis B there is no risk to the baby. So, I routinely do the hepatitis B shot at the 2 week visit so it automatically goes into our office electronic immunization record. If it is done in the hospital, that is ok. Just let us know so we can manually enter it into our records. 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 one the children's hospital outside of the newborn nursery, we work with that hospital'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. 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. In fact, if you get any care outside our office, please let us know. Though we get some notes back from ERs, and hospitals and consultants, we don't get notes from all of these visits. And, it can take a while for us to receive notes. We value the continuity of care with our patients, so please keep us informed of other visits or questions you have about those visits.



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. March through 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.