

Welcome Guide

We're delighted to welcome you to the Columbia Pediatrics family! Whether you're a first-time parent or are joining us from elsewhere, we hope that the following introduction to our office can help familiarize you with our services and procedures.

PARKING

There is a two-story parking structure across the street from our building on Columbia Avenue. The charge is \$3 per entry, with parking available all day. We do not validate. Limited free parking can also be found along Long Beach Boulevard, but please be aware of any posted restrictions by the city.

PRENATAL VISIT & OFFICE TOURS

Meeting prospective pediatricians before establishing care with them is a very wise thing for parents and parents-to-be to do for their child. We would love to meet with you in-person and introduce ourselves and our practice. Please call to set up a late-afternoon appointment with one of our doctors. We look forward to answering your questions and giving you a personal tour of our office.

YOUR CHILD'S FIRST VISIT

Please plan on arriving a half-hour before your scheduled appointment time so that we can process your initial registration and insurance verification in a timely fashion. To aid you in this process, you can review and download from this website all the necessary forms: the Notice of Privacy Practices (under [Statements and Policies](#)), the Authorization to Treat Minor Children (under [Forms](#)), and the Registration form (under [Forms](#)). Also bring your insurance card and any available medical records for your child, including immunization records, hospital reports, and notes from previous health care providers and specialists. Your previous providers may ask for a medical release form before they forward your information; that form can also be found in the [Forms](#) section of the website.

CHOOSING A DOCTOR

The doctor-patient-parent relationship is central to the care of our children. By scheduling consistent visits with one specific pediatrician for both routine and even urgent appointments, we can build that relationship and really get to know your family and your specific health concerns. Whenever you make an appointment, just let the front office receptionist know whom you have chosen from among the eight pediatricians to be your regular doctor. Depending on your doctor's availability and the medical urgency of your request, we will do our best to accommodate you. However, if you do end up seeing another one of our doctors, please schedule any follow-up visits with either that same doctor or with your regular doctor as instructed.

APPOINTMENTS AND URGENT VISITS

We are open weekdays for all visits and Saturday mornings for urgent visits. We are closed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. We are open for a half-day on Thanksgiving Friday, Christmas Eve, and New Year's Eve. We encourage you to call us during regular office hours should an urgent matter arise and you feel a same-day appointment is necessary. In order to serve all of our families in a timely fashion, we discourage "walk-in" appointments but ask that you call us first so that we can provide you with a specific appointment time. We also ask for your patience, especially during the busy winter months or during unexpected patient emergencies. As we aim to provide quality care to each and every one of our patients, moments such as these may mean additional

unforeseen waiting times.

If we are already closed for the day, there are two area urgent care clinics that we recommend:

Willow Urgent Care Center

2704 E. Willow Street

Signal Hill, CA 90755-2217

(562) 595-0203

www.willowurgentcare.com

Seal Beach Family Urgent Care

1198 Pacific Coast Hwy

Seal Beach, CA 90740-6248

(562) 799-7071

sealbeachfamilymedicalgroup.com

They are open until 8:00pm on weeknights and from 9:00am-5:00pm on weekends. They are also open from 9:00am-2:00pm on most holidays. They accept most PPO insurances and MHIPA; please call ahead for eligibility.

Should these clinics also be unavailable, then we prefer that you go to Miller Children's Hospital Emergency Department. Barring a true emergency, this option should only be used as a "last resort" or if you were directed to go there by one of our healthcare providers. Of course, if there is a true emergency, then call 911 immediately or go to the nearest available emergency department.

OFFICE PHONE CALLS

During regular office hours, you have the option of leaving a voice mail with the nurse or with your doctor. Please be aware that voice mail messages left for the doctors are often not returned until the end of the day when they are done seeing patients. *Do not leave urgent messages in the doctor voice mailbox.* If you do have an urgent matter, instead leave a message for the nurse. She will call you back usually within the hour and help address your concerns.

If you call the office after hours, you will be connected to our exchange service. If you have an urgent matter, you can ask the exchange to page the doctor on-call who will return your call within the hour. When you ask to speak to a doctor after hours, *the main question he or she will address is whether your child needs to be seen right away or if this matter can be managed at home until the office opens in the morning.* You may be able to find answers to common first aid questions on our webpage at www.columbiapediatrics.com, but if you are at all uncomfortable or unsure, do not hesitate to page the doctor. However, if your concern does not involve an urgent medical situation, we ask that you instead leave a routine message with the exchange or call back when the office re-opens.