

GBMC PEDIATRIC GROUP

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Dear Families of the GBMC Pediatric Group:

Thank you for allowing us to be your child's medical home. It is an honor and a privilege.

Some office updates and helpful reminders for the 2025-26 school year:

Flu vaccine: We recommend it! The flu vaccine has arrived for all insurances. We have begun offering them at well and sick visits (when possible). In addition, we will start scheduling our popular Saturday flu shot clinics in October. We encourage our older patients to get the flu vaccine at clinics, schools and retail pharmacies that offer them. We will also have flu vaccine clinics prioritized for young children Tuesday mornings and Friday. Please call Monday of the week you desire the vaccine to schedule.

COVID vaccine: We follow the American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines which advise all infants 6-23 months get the vaccine and all children 2 and up who have a risk factor for severe COVID or who are exposed to someone with a risk factor, get the vaccine. We have the updated Moderna covid vaccine for children less than 12 and will be prioritizing appointments for children less than 5 years who are not able to get the vaccine at pharmacies or clinics.

New Preventative Health Recommendations

Beyfortus: Beyfortus is a RSV immunoglobulin which works like a preventive medication to protect against RSV for one season. RSV season starts in October. If you have a baby less than eight months in October or a baby less than two years with lung problems or prematurity, please ask us about this so we may help prevent severe RSV in your baby. We will be administering this starting in late September.

Pneumococcal Vaccine with 20 Serotypes (PCV 20): There is a new recommendation that children three years of age and up with moderate asthma or a history of lung disease get a booster of this pneumonia vaccine. We already give this vaccine to babies routinely, but children older than three received an older form of the vaccine. Expect that your provider may discuss this at your child's next well visit if they are eligible.

Office hours: Monday – Friday: 8am-5pm, with evening hours on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays until 6pm. Saturdays: 8am-11am for sick visits only. Please call us in advance for all office visits. We have many appointment slots available daily for same day sick visits, but we are unable to accommodate walk-in appointments.

MyChart: MyChart messaging is a great way to contact our office about non-urgent questions and follow-up questions. The option to attach pictures is one that has been a great help to us, and we encourage you to use it. However, please understand that due to the large volume of messages we often must ask parents and patients to schedule a video or in person visit to discuss their concerns. This is often the case if your message includes a question that is not a yes or no response or is a new problem we have not discussed with you before. If you receive a response to schedule an appointment, know that your message will not be addressed by our providers until you schedule an appointment.

MyChart or email is great for referral requests. Send us a MyChart message, email referrals@gbmc.org or call 443-849-3151 with the date of your child's appointment, the name, location, phone and fax number

of the specialist they are seeing, and the reason for the visit. Your message will go directly to our referral team. This speeds up the process for you and us.

Scheduling: We now allow scheduling of some well visits only through MyChart. However, all sick visits must be scheduled over the phone. Although some practices allow scheduling of all visits through MyChart, due to the unique nature of pediatrics, we are only able to schedule certain types of well visits and not many slots are available. If you have a sick child or a concern, please call us to schedule so we can get you in the right spot for your child. Because of the overwhelming number of MyChart messages we receive daily, please do not send a MyChart message to schedule an appointment. We understand schedules change, but please message or call us if you need to reschedule at least 4 hours prior to your appointment. Patients who miss multiple appointments without calling will be dismissed from the practice.

Controlled Substance Prescriptions: Just a reminder that if your child uses a controlled substance (ADHD medication) or is on another long-term medication requiring monitoring, you will be required to schedule a medication monitoring appointment at least every 3-6 months. Please schedule this type of visit in advance. When you need a refill, please send your refill request in advance through MyChart with a note verifying your child's dose and pharmacy. Please allow 4 business days for processing.

Co-Payments and Insurance: Please bring a copy of your insurance card (a picture is fine) to each visit and update us of any changes to your address or phone number. Sending a picture of a new card through MyChart is also helpful. We want to be able to bill the correct insurance. If we have inaccurate insurance information, you will receive a bill for the visit. Please also be aware if you have an insurance that has a PCP listed on the card, that PCP needs to be one of the providers in our office. If someone else is listed, you will need to call and have it changed before being seen in our office.

After-hour emergency phone calls: We have a pediatric on-call nurse service for emergency issues when the office is closed. If you need to reach them, please call our office number and you will receive a call back by a nurse. They are trained to help you figure out if your child needs to go to the emergency room/urgent care or if you can provide home care until the office reopens. They cannot schedule appointments, call in prescription refills or help with non-urgent issues. We do reserve the right to charge a \$20 fee for after-hours phone calls that are not associated with a past or future visit to us or the emergency room.

Forms: From June to September the number of forms we receive is overwhelming. We work hard to keep up and return them to you within 10 business days. Please send them early with your parent portion filled out and include a list of any medications, including dosages, your child will need at camp or school. This is a patient safety issue and if not filled out it will delay the forms so please look at the forms before sending them to us. Also, let us know how you want the form returned to you. Many patients find it helpful to use our dedicated forms email address to email us the forms at gbmckids@gbmc.org. We charge \$20 per set of forms and there is an extra \$25 rush fee if needed in 48 hours. If possible, some providers can complete forms at your child's well visit. In order for your form to be filled out, you must present the form at check-in and have the parent or athlete section filled out.

As always, we thank you for allowing us to care for your children,

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Nurse Practitioner Abby Adams
Nurse Practitioner Holly Mathews