



OFFICE POLICIES

APPOINTMENTS

- **WELL VISITS:** Litchfield County Pediatrics follows the recommended well child visit schedule outlined by the American Academy of Pediatrics. This schedule includes well child visits at the following ages: 2 weeks, 1 month, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months, (30 months if needed); yearly visits age 3 and above.
- **SICK VISITS, CONSULTS, FOLLOW-UP VISITS:** We make our best effort to see all sick children on the same day if possible. Urgent care appointments are available every day Monday-Friday, Tuesday/Thursday evenings, and Saturday mornings. We do not accept walk-in appointments at this time. However, in situations where a patient does walk-in for an appointment, they will be placed in the next available appointment time. Often times families request to "add on" siblings to appointments. We will add the second child if the schedule permits. Otherwise, we may need to re-schedule your appointment to a time that we can accommodate both children. Consults for chronic medical/psychological problems and school difficulties require longer appointment times and therefore may take up to several weeks to get an appointment, especially if a specific provider is requested. Follow-up appointments are based on provider discretion and should be made with the requesting provider for continuity of care.
- **CANCELLATIONS, LATE ARRIVALS, MISSED APPOINTMENTS:** We request that you give us 24 hours notice for cancellations. We understand that emergencies or schedule conflicts arise, so please just give us a call. Also, call to let us know if you are running late for your appointment. If you arrive for your appointment 15 minutes late, we will need to reschedule it. Completely missed appointments are concerning to us in many ways but mostly because they interfere with our ability to provide good medical care to your child. If you miss three or more appointments within a year, you may be dismissed from the practice.

PATIENT PORTAL

We strongly encourage you to sign up for our patient portal. Having a portal account is one of the most convenient ways to communicate with the staff and providers at Litchfield County Pediatrics. You can send us **non-urgent** messages about appointments, prescriptions refills, questions for your provider, and more. In addition, you can easily access and print your child's vaccine records, growth charts, and school forms from the portal. As part of our efforts to provide your children great pediatric care, we also use the patient portal to send you "tasks" to complete screening developmental/emotional/behavioral questionnaires before your child's well visit with us.

PRESCRIPTIONS AND REFILLS

Prescription refills should be requested through your pharmacy. If your prescription does not have any refills left at the pharmacy, they will call us/message us for a new prescription. Refill requests can also be submitted through the patient portal. Please do not allow your child's prescription to run out before submitting your refill request. Allow a minimum of 3 business days for the prescription to be approved by the provider and filled. We require well child visits to be up to date before refilling medications. Many chronic medications require more frequent follow up appointments and, as such, we may request that you schedule a follow up for your child. Please note that prescriptions will not be refilled by the covering/on call provider after hours.

SCHOOL, CAMP, AND DAYCARE FORMS

We are happy to complete school, camp, or daycare forms for your child when needed. If the form is different from the standard Connecticut school or daycare form, bring it to your child's well visit and we will do our best to

complete it at that time. Otherwise, we require at least 3 business days' notification to complete forms. If your child is out of date with his or her well child visit, we may require you to make an appointment for an updated exam. The request for school forms can be submitted by phone, fax, or via our portal. Completed forms will be scanned into the portal and accessible for printing at your convenience. When requested, the forms can also be mailed or faxed to you. We do not email forms as we do not have a secure, HIPAA compliant email system at this time.

SCHOOL NOTES

We will provide school excuse notes if your child was seen in our office for an illness or a well child visit. If your child was seen by a medical provider outside of this office (specialist visit, ER visit, etc.), a note should be requested from that provider, not from Litchfield County Pediatrics. Connecticut school policy allows for up to nine excuses that are approved by the parent or guardian. If your child is sick but you do not feel that he or she needs an appointment in our office, we recommend communicating closely with your school nurse so that he or she is aware of the illness. If your child has a chronic medical condition that may require recurrent school absences, please discuss the options for alternative school plans with the LCP providers.

MEDICAL RECORDS

Medical records may be requested through the patient portal or by completing our *Authorization to Release Medical Records form* that is available in the office or on our website. Fees may apply for copies. If you transfer out of our practice, we will provide you or your new provider a copy of your records free of charge. Any subsequent requests, legal requests, or requests from the State of Connecticut disability program will be charged at a rate of 65 cents a page.

VACCINE POLICY

Vaccines are one of the most important ways parents can protect their children against serious infectious diseases. Infants and young children are particularly vulnerable to these diseases. While there are small risks associated with every vaccine, children are far more likely to be harmed by the disease than by the vaccine. The providers at Litchfield County Pediatrics follow the immunization schedule outlined by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Centers for Disease Control. We are no longer accepting new patients who do not follow this schedule (please reference our full vaccine policy).

EMERGENCIES, AFTER HOURS, & WEEKEND CALLS

For all emergencies, please call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. All routine questions and prescription refills should wait for our regular business hours. For urgent concerns or questions, call our main office number (860-489-4144) for instructions on contacting the "on-call" provider.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

- **CHILDREN ACCOMPANIED BY NON-PARENT/GUARDIAN OR UNACCOMPANIED TEEN OVER AGE 16:** Parents should make every effort possible to accompany their children to their appointments with Litchfield County Pediatrics. However, we recognize that there may be times that a parent/guardian is unable attend the visit. In that situation, please complete our *Authorization for Child to Receive Care* form available on our website prior to your child's appointment. In addition, a parent should be readily available by phone at the time of the child's visit in order to answer questions or to provide verbal consent for vaccines or procedures.
- **DIVORCE, SEPARATION:** Divorce can be a difficult time for children and their parents. Our focus during a time like this is the medical, psychological, and emotional health of our patients, not the legal issues between parents. Unless there is a court order in the child's record that restricts a parent's rights, we will honor medical decision making by either parent. It is the responsibility of the parents to communicate with each other about their child's care. Payments (co-pays, deductibles, etc.) for office visits are due at the time of the visit regardless of which parent is responsible for medical coverage.