

Primary Pediatric Medical Group, Inc.

Oakland Office

Castro Valley Office

Alameda Office

FINANCIAL AND BILLING POLICIES

To our families:

We welcome you to our office and strive to provide you with the highest quality medical care. In an effort to foster a collaborative relationship, we ask that you accept some responsibilities as well. Please read the following policies carefully.

Checkups: Insurance companies have recently changed what they will cover during a checkup (well exam). What is routinely covered by our practice at the preventive care visits are measurements, check of body parts and systems, discussion of age related anticipatory guidance, safety information, nutrition, development and growth, schooling, filling out forms for sports, and refill medications.

Acute concerns: Other concerns that are more complicated and involve more time or expertise such as chronic headaches, stomach pains, psychological/school problems, or other medical issues usually require a separate code and charge in addition to the check-up. We practice medicine based on guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics. Occasionally, some things such as blood work, other labs, and prolonged discussion of topics at the time of the check-up are either not covered by your insurance or are put towards your deductible. It is up to your insurance medical plan to determine if and how they will pay these charges. Some plans pay 100%, others require a separate co-pay (even if there is no co-pay for check-ups), and others do not cover these separate charges at all, considering it a “non-covered item”. These billing issues are between you and your insurance company, and we always suggest you check with your insurer or HR department BEFORE coming to the doctor to know just what is covered and what is not by YOUR plan as you are responsible for payment of charges not covered/paid by your plan within 30 days after your insurance processes your claim..

The care we provide during these encounters is done in the interest of your child’s current and future health regardless of insurance/payment issues, and we do not recommend postponing or omitting any labs, tests, or evaluations.

Newborns: The first office visit after birth is considered a follow-up and not a well-exam/ well-check so please be prepared if co-pays/deductibles apply according to your health plan.

All co-payments, deductibles, outstanding balances and other fees are due at the time of your visit.

- Please understand your insurance policy, and be sure to contact them to assure that we are in their provider network. ***We can no longer attest to inclusion in networks as the insurance companies frequently make adjustments without our knowledge.*** Some services may not be covered, such as circumcisions and phone consultations. In such cases, you will be responsible for payment.
- Please also be aware of co-payment and deductible requirements within your plan. We seldom have easy or accurate access to that information.
- As of March 2017, we implemented “Easy Pay” where we will keep your credit card on file. Please see the Easy Pay Policy Notice. We accept cash, checks, Visa, MasterCard, and Discover.
- There is a \$10 billing charge for co-pays not paid at the time of your visit.
- Unfortunately, failure to make regular payments on your account balance may result in transfer to a collection agency.

- We will not schedule further well child appointments (routine check-ups) for your child if you stop making regular payments or your account is turned over to a collection agency.

Insurance must be current and verifiable at the time of each visit.

- Please show your child's insurance card and a picture form of identification **each** time you come to our office.
- If you change your insurance and fail to provide us with current information, you will be responsible for payment at the time of your appointment.

In cases of divorce or separation, the legal guardian and/or the person bringing the child in for services will be held responsible for paying any balance originating from that visit.

- If you provide legal documentation that someone other than the legal guardian is financially responsible and you provide billing information for that responsible party, we will attempt to bill that party. However, if the balance is unpaid by that person, you will be held responsible for the balance on your child's account.

Late Arrival/ No show: Please notify us at least 8 business hours in advance if you need to cancel or change your appointment time.

- If we know 8 business hours ahead, then someone else can use the appointment time.
- Failure to notify us will result in a \$35.00 charge.
- We will not schedule further well child appointments for your child if you have repeated missed appointments or repeated last minute cancellations. This may also result in terminating our relationship with you.
- As a courtesy and as we have time, we attempt appointment reminder calls whenever possible, but please don't rely on them.
- If you arrive late for your appointment, you may be rescheduled for another day.

In order to keep our Practice viable, there are fees to complete some forms, prescription refills, chart copies, phone advice, phone consultations or returned checks.

- Please present all forms to the medical assistant in the exam room.
- Some lengthy forms or duplicate forms may incur a charge of \$25.00.
- One CA State immunization card will be provided free per child, with a \$15.00 fee for each additional card. As the patient portal is developed, the vaccine record will be able to be downloaded.
- Prescription refills for controlled substances may incur a charge of \$25.00 or more.
- We will provide a copy of the medical record upon transfer to another medical practice. There is a handling fee for this service. Please note the medical records of children 12 and over must comply with the State's privacy laws.
- Some phone calls with the doctor will result in a charge appropriate to the level of service. Many insurers do not pay for phone management and in that case you would be responsible for payment.
- \$30.00 will be charged to your account for any returned checks.

Plan ahead for your prescription refills.

- Please call your pharmacy (or us if that is appropriate) *at least* 3 business days before your child runs out of medication. The pharmacy will contact us if needed.
- If your provider is not in the office when the pharmacy contacts us, the request may need to wait until he or she returns, so please plan accordingly.
- A prescription for a controlled substance often requires an office visit to get a refill. Please plan *well in advance* of your child's medication running out, so we can schedule an office visit in plenty of time.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.