



## Check Ups at Bambini

### I'm Busy -- Why Bother?

Fair question. And if this is your ninth child, and there are no chronic health challenges, it may be reasonable to skip at least some of them. That's up to you as parents.

But consider that most health insurance companies actually cover the full cost of these visits, even for families with high deductible plans. That's six in the first year, three in the second, and annually starting at age three. Moreover, most daycare centers, schools, and summer camps want to have a recent PE on record.

True, it is not very often that doctors actually discover a heart murmur, find a bad scoliosis, or discern other subtle health problems during a routine check-up -- but through the years, we have seen a few serious matters noted early thanks to a routine tune up.

Perhaps the most valuable benefit of these visits is that they help develop a warm doctor-patient & parent relationship. This comes in handy in the event of an emergency, a family difficulty, or other stress.

### When to Schedule

**First year:** 2 days (after discharge), 2 weeks, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, and 9 month

**2nd - 3rd years:** 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months, 30 months

**Age three through adulthood:** annually (around birth date)

Some families like to do the annual PE on their school-age children during the summer. This is fine with us. The office is usually less busy with illness. Some insurance companies will not pay for an annual check unless it has been at least 11 months since the last one. Some actually insist on the full 12 months.

### What to Expect

For infants and toddlers, the check up includes some paperwork, about 10 minutes with the nurse getting measurements and some history, and then about 20 minutes with the doctor -- more history, a physical exam, and some recommendations. A few more minutes with the nurse for vaccination may conclude the visit.

For school age children, the visit often includes, in addition to the above, a test of vision and hearing. If your child has multiple or serious chronic health problems, it likely will not be possible to address them adequately at a routine check-up.

At the end of the visit, you will likely receive a completed physical exam form for your school, camps, sports programs, or child care centers.