



# Hand in Hand News

A Quarterly Newsletter from Advanced Pediatric Associates

## Advancing Pediatric Care for Our Patients!

### Advanced Pediatric Associates participates in Colorado Pediatric Partners Asthma Registry!

The providers at Advanced Pediatrics are committed to providing the most advanced care available for children with asthma. As such, our clinical committee regularly reviews the latest advancements in asthma care and evaluates whether to incorporate them into the clinical guideline our providers use in treating asthma patients.

Asthma is a chronic respiratory disease commonly identified during childhood which affects the airways and may cause persistent cough, wheezing, difficulty breathing with exercise, nighttime cough, and shortness of breath or difficulty breathing. According to a 2006 National Health Interview Survey 9.4% of U.S. children currently have asthma. Fortunately, asthma can be controlled in the majority of children if properly treated.

The practice has recently updated its clinical guideline on asthma to incorporate new recommendations from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). In addition, our providers and staff have attended in-service meetings with allergy and asthma specialists and The Children's Hospital Pulmonary Department to review these new guidelines, as well as recommendations for improving patient training on asthma medications.

The goals of our asthma program are to help patients to:

- ◆ Maintain normal lung function and activity levels
- ◆ Prevent chronic symptoms
- ◆ Use medication appropriately, minimizing use of "rescue" medications
- ◆ Recognize and develop strategies to avoid triggers

- ◆ Reduce acute attacks which require sick visits, trips to the emergency room, and hospitalizations

In April, Advanced Pediatrics began participating in an asthma registry pilot project with Colorado Pediatric Partners. This new registry is designed to track and monitor the progress of asthma patients. Providers and RNs at Advanced Pediatrics have begun populating the data base with APA patients who have been diagnosed with asthma. In addition, patients with a diagnosis of wheezing will be evaluated for inclusion in the data base. Patients in the data base will be classified as having *intermittent* or *persistent* asthma. The new registry will provide for improved patient/parent education, with handouts and treatment plans available for download. In addition, data in our EMR will interface with the registry and be able to be sorted and analyzed to identify trends and opportunities for improvement in patient care. The benefits of the registry project will help lead to optimal treatment plans and better parent/patient education, as well as help asthma patients and providers better reach the goals of maintaining activity and maximal pulmonary function, with a reduction in acute visits and trips to the emergency department.

If you have a child that has been diagnosed with asthma or wheezing, ask your provider whether your child has been included in the registry. If your child has not had an asthma visit in the last six months, please call our central appointment line to schedule one as soon as possible. Parents may call our nurse advice line if they are interested in having their child considered for inclusion in the registry.



## Working to Build a Better Community!

**Nancy Barber Starr, MS, CPNP, is editor and author of new Pediatric Primary Care textbook!** Advanced Pediatrics congratulates Nancy Barber Starr as one of the editors for a new edition of Pediatric Primary Care textbook. Pediatric Primary Care is used by pediatric and primary care practices across the U.S., as well as by students in (advanced practice) nursing schools. In addition to her role as editor for Pediatric Primary Care, Nancy Barber Starr also authored four chapters of the new textbook on topics including Self Perception Issues, Genitourinary Disorders, Gynecologic Conditions and Dermatologic Diseases. To lend her expertise as Administrator of Advanced Pediatrics, Denise Hall also authored a chapter of the textbook entitled "Practice Management Strategies for a Health Care Practice". The staff at Advanced Pediatrics is committed to improving the quality of pediatric care in the U.S. and is involved with a number of local and national health organizations and teaching programs in addition to working at APA.

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### Inside This Issue

Practice News **page 2**

EMR Going Strong!

Time to Schedule Annual Well Care and School/ Camp/Sports Physicals

Immunizations - Critically Important to Your Child's Long Term Health!

Parker Office Celebrates 4th Birthday!

Employment Opportunities

Health & Safety **page 3**

Nutrition Tip for Spring – Healthier Mealtime Makeovers!

Dealing with Springtime Allergies

Talking to Teens about Sex

Focus on Wellness **page 4**

Positive Parenting!



*Hand in Hand for Healthier Children*



## EMR (Electronic Medical Records) Going Strong!

Many of our patients have noticed that our providers are now using a laptop computer, rather than a paper chart, to record patient information during office visits. Our staff is very excited about the many long term benefits that the new EMR (Electronic Medical Records) will provide our patients and is making steady progress in training and implementation. Our providers are now using the new EMR at all office visits, including Saturday

appointments. One benefit of the new EMR that parents really appreciate is the instant transfer of prescription requests directly from our EMR during office visits to the patient's pharmacy, so that refills are typically available for immediate pick up following an appointment at one of our offices. Our medical records staff is busy working to get all of our patients' charts scanned and set up in our system. Scanning is already completed at our Parker office, and we

hope to have all scanning completed at the Aurora and Centennial offices by the end of the summer. Feel welcome to ask your provider whether your child's chart has been scanned or any other questions you may have regarding the new EMR at your next appointment!



## Time to Schedule Annual Well Care Exams and School/Camp/Sports Physicals



With summer approaching, it is time to schedule well care exams, and school, sports and camp physicals. Consistent with guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics, we

recommend well care exams on an annual basis beginning at age two. For children under two years of age, exams are scheduled at 2 weeks, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months and 18 months.

*If your child is entering kindergarten, 6th or 10th grade, there are new vaccine requirements. In addition, if your child chooses to participate in high school athletics an annual physical is required.*

Routine well child care exams play an important role in keeping your child healthy. We look forward to getting to know you and your child better at these important visits. These exams provide an opportunity for our providers to examine your child's growth and development and discuss age specific health, behavior and safety issues. These visits often include a vision

screening, important lab work and routine immunizations.

In order to best meet patient needs, our summer schedule includes additional well care appointments beginning in May. If it has been over a year since your child's last well care exam or you are in need of a sports or camp physical, please call our Central Appointment Line as soon as possible, as our summer well care schedule fills up quickly. As always, please check with your insurance company to learn about your well care coverage. Some plans may not cover annual well care exams.

## Immunizations - Critically Important to Your Child's Long Term Health!

The providers at Advanced Pediatrics strongly believe that childhood immunizations are critically important to the long term health of children. We join the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Centers for Disease Control in recommending all children be vaccinated according to recommended vaccine schedules. Prior to the creation of today's vaccines, thousands – and sometimes millions – of children became infected with diseases that resulted in lifelong disabilities or death. The fact that we don't see certain diseases anymore doesn't

mean they no longer exist... it simply means the vaccines are working!

Statistics continue to show that when immunization rates drop, dangerous childhood diseases reappear. In the 1980's when measles immunization rates among preschool children dropped, there was an outbreak resulting in 55,000 cases of measles, 11,000 hospitalizations and 123 deaths in the U.S. More recently, there has been another increase in confirmed measles cases. From January - April 2008, 64 measles

cases were reported to the CDC - the most reported by this date for any year since 2001. Of the 64 cases, 63 were unvaccinated or had undocumented vaccination status. These findings underscore the ongoing risk for measles among the unvaccinated and the importance of maintaining high levels of vaccination. *We request that parents who have concerns regarding vaccinating their children schedule a separate immunization consultation visit so that our providers will have enough time allocated to fully address concerns.*

## Parker Office Celebrates 4th Birthday!

Did you know that we are celebrating the 4th birthday of our Parker office? Our Parker office was opened in April 2004 to better serve Douglas County residents. Located in the Parker Adventist Professional Building, Parker patients appreciate the proximity to lab and x-ray services at Parker Adventist Hospital. Children love the warm, friendly "Imagine A World" décor complete with beautiful murals

of the Australian "Great Barrier Reef", playful penguins, and friendly kangaroos and koalas. Originally staffed with just one provider, our Parker office now staffs three to four providers and sees an average of 60 patients per day. Our staff is pleased to be a part of the Parker community and enjoys getting to know Parker residents. Advanced Pediatrics is a member of the Parker Chamber of Commerce and involved in

the Parker community, supporting kid friendly events such as the Parker Chamber Movie Night and Kids Fall Frenzy Triathlon. If you have a friend or family member in the Parker community looking for a pediatrician, please invite them to make an appointment at our Parker office!



## Employment Opportunities at Advanced Pediatrics

Come join the APA team! We often have positions open at our offices and invite qualified applicants to apply. Applicants must possess appropriate experience, have great customer service skills, and enjoy working with children and their families. Advanced Pediatrics offers competitive salaries and benefits and is an equal opportunity employer. For information on job opportunities at Advanced Pediatrics, visit the employment page of our website at: [www.AdvancedPediatricAssociates.com](http://www.AdvancedPediatricAssociates.com)



# Health and Safety Tips



## Nutrition Tip for Spring – Healthier Mealtime Makeovers!

Help give your children the kid friendly meals they love, while trimming fats and providing more of the nutrients they need with these simple mealtime makeovers:

### Peanut Butter & Jelly

Try using fortified whole grain bread, 100% fruit spread, and “no sugar added” peanut butter (or even better - soy nut butter) to decrease fat and add valuable protein, fiber, calcium, iron and folic acid.

### Grilled Cheese

Use fortified whole grain bread and 2% milk American cheese, and grill on no stick pan without butter to decrease fat and cholesterol and increase protein, fiber, calcium, iron and folic acid.

### Pizza

Instead of frozen pizzas which are loaded with fat and sodium, try making your own with whole-wheat pizza crust (Boboli makes a ready to bake crust), canned pizza sauce, part skim low-moisture mozzarella cheese, turkey pepperoni, and sliced

veggies to decrease fat and sodium and add valuable fiber and vitamins. For mini-pizzas, try making with whole grain fortified English muffins!



For more mealtime makeover ideas, visit [www.kidhealth.org/parent/](http://www.kidhealth.org/parent/) and search for “mealtime makeovers”.

## Dealing with Springtime Allergies - Reprinted from the American Academy of Pediatrics

### Clues that your child may have an allergy:



◆ Recurrent red, itchy, dry, or scaly rashes in the creases of the skin, wrists, and ankles.

- ◆ Repeated or chronic cold like symptoms (runny nose, nasal stuffiness, sneezing and throat clearing) that last more than a week or two, or develop at about the same time every year.
- ◆ Nose rubbing, sniffing, snorting, sneezing and itchy, runny eyes.
- ◆ Itching or tingling sensations in the mouth and throat. Itchiness is not usually a complaint with a cold, but it is the hallmark of an allergy problem.
- ◆ Coughing, wheezing, difficulty breathing, and other respiratory symptoms.

### Common allergens:

- ◆ Dust (contains dust mites and finely ground particles from other allergens)
- ◆ Pollen (trees, grasses, weeds)
- ◆ Fungi (including molds too small to be seen with the naked eye)
- ◆ Furry animals (cats, dogs, guinea pigs, gerbils, rabbits, and other pets)
- ◆ Latex (household articles such as rubber gloves and toys, balloons)
- ◆ Foods such as cow's milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, soy, wheat and fish

### How to manage allergic nasal symptoms:

- ◆ Use air conditioners, where possible, to reduce exposure to pollen in your home and car.
- ◆ Children with allergies to molds should avoid playing near decaying vegetation or composts.
- ◆ Padded furnishings such as mattresses, box springs, pillows and cushions should be encased in allergen-proof, zip-up covers.

- ◆ Wash linens weekly, and blankets, every 2 to 3 weeks, in hot water.
- ◆ Pillows should be replaced every 2 to 3 years.

### Medications to suppress symptoms:

**Antihistamines** - Help with itchy watery eyes, runny nose and sneezing, as well as itchy skin and hives (may cause drowsiness).

**Nasal Corticosteroids** - Highly effective for allergy treatment and are widely used to stop chronic symptoms. Safe to use in children over long periods of time.

**Allergy Immunotherapy** - Allergy shots may be recommended to reduce your child's sensitivity to airborne allergens. Not every allergy problem can or needs to be treated with allergy shots, but treatment of respiratory allergies to pollen, dust mites, and outdoor molds is often successful.

## Talking to Teens about Sex

**Did you know that April is STD Awareness Month and May is Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month?** Recent national statistics regarding teenage sexual health are alarming:

- ◆ 25% of female teens infected with a STD
- ◆ 31% of female teens pregnant at least once before they reach age 20
- ◆ 1/3 of 9th graders and 60% of 12th graders sexually active

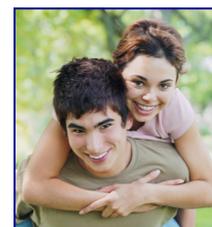
How do you prevent your teen from becoming one of these statistics? In a study, “Beyond the ‘Big Talk’: The Roles of Breadth and Repetition in Parent-Adolescent Communication about Sexual Topics,” researchers found teens who talked repeatedly about sexual topics with their parents felt closer to their parents and felt their discussions about sex were more open.

Experts insist that when parents openly address sexual questions in a factual, honest and non-lecturing way, teens are more likely to come to their parents with sexual concerns. In today's hyper-sexualized culture of internet and mass media messages, parents must carefully prepare children for the media glorification of irresponsible sexuality. One way to do this is to turn encounters with the media into teachable moments. Encourage your child to discuss the messages he or she sees in ads or in movies. Focus these discussions on the concept of responsibility and safety by discussing what the consequences for sexual decisions may be. By discussing media messages together, parents can build trust with their child.

Parents often wonder at what age they should start discussing sex with their child. It is a

good idea to start laying the groundwork for these discussions long before the onset of puberty. The more frequently and frankly these matters are discussed, the more likely a teen will feel comfortable to talk openly with a parent as he or she grows. As your child matures, key topics to discuss include:

- ◆ Specifics regarding the risks of pregnancy & STDs and effectiveness of birth control
- ◆ Dispelling “urban myths” your child may hear on the street
- ◆ Empower your child with tools and your support to withstand peer pressure





# Focus on Wellness



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## Positive Parenting! - Excerpts from Kids Health and the AAP

Every parent knows that encouraging good behavior can feel like an uphill struggle at times! One of the most important aspects of parenting is to establish routines and rules so that children know what is expected of them. When children are young, the most important limits to set are the ones about safety like, "Hold my hand in the parking lot and when crossing the street." As children get older the situations they face become more varied, requiring broader rules. In general, positive parenting is more about guiding children to good behavior than it is about punishment. The goal of discipline is to help children choose acceptable behaviors and learn self-control. Try these steps to positive parenting:



- ◆ **Nurture your child's self esteem.** By allowing your child to do things independently and praising accomplishments and good behavior, you will make your child feel confident and capable of accomplishing things and controlling his or her behavior. When behavior does not meet your expectations, choose your words carefully and reassure your child that it is the behavior, not him or her, that you dislike.
- ◆ **Catch your child being good.** Recognizing good behavior on a regular basis with love, hugs and compliments does more to encourage good behavior over the long term than repeated reprimands. Make a point to find something to praise every day!
- ◆ **Set limits and be consistent with discipline.** Establish house rules that help your children understand your expectations and be consistent in enforcing them. When rules aren't followed, consider the following discipline tools:
  - **Establish logical consequences.** When possible, the consequence for bad behavior should relate to the misdeed in an easy-to-understand way - - If children are fighting over a toy, put the toy away until the next day and then let them try again.
  - **Take away privileges.** When finding a logical consequence is difficult, taking away a privilege that a child values can be affective for children over the age of 4 or 5 - - "No friends over this afternoon because you didn't do your chores."
  - **Call for a timeout.** This is a very effective tool for calming tantrums and defusing aggressive behaviors (including talking back, interrupting and whining). Experts recommend one minute of timeout for each year of life. Timeouts should take place in a safe, boring location that is free from distraction.
- ◆ **Make time for your children.** With today's busy schedules, it is very important to spend some quality time together with your children each day. Children who are not getting the attention they want from their parents often misbehave to get noticed. Take time for family meals and a few minutes together at bedtime each day and schedule a few hours of family time together each week for a special outing or activity. As your child becomes an adolescent, be available to attend activities your teen participates in.
- ◆ **Be a good role model.** Be aware that you are being observed by your children and model the traits you wish to develop in your child: respect, friendliness, honesty, kindness, tolerance and empathy for others. Control your temper, express thanks and treat your children the way you want them to treat others.
- ◆ **Make communication a priority.** Parents who reason with their children allow them to understand and learn in a nonjudgmental way. Invite your child to work on solutions to conflicts with you.
- ◆ **Be flexible and willing to adjust your parenting style.** With toddlers, modify his or her environment so that fewer things are off limits. As your child grows, gradually change your parenting style to fit his or her maturity level. During adolescence, continue to provide guidance, encouragement and discipline, while allowing your teen to earn more independence.
- ◆ **Show that your love is unconditional.** Strive to nurture and encourage even when disciplining. Make sure your child know that although you expect better behavior, your love is there no matter what.
- ◆ **Be aware of your own needs and limitations as a parent.** As with children, no parent is perfect. Be forgiving of yourself and try to make parenting a manageable job. Take time to do things for yourself.

### Discipline Don'ts!

- ◆ **No hitting or spanking** - This teaches kids that violence is an acceptable way to show anger.
- ◆ **No labels** - Behavior may be bad, but a child isn't!
- ◆ **No unreasonable expectations** - Keep your child's age, temperament, and maturity in mind when setting rules and limitations.
- ◆ **No idle threats** - Kids learn quickly that you don't mean what you say and will take advantage by ignoring rules.
- ◆ **Avoid inconsistencies between parents** - When parents don't present a united approach, children take advantage.

*Hand in Hand for Healthier Children*