



February 2009

Patient Newsletter

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Welcome Karen!

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Welcome Karen!

We are excited to introduce the newest member of our Performance Pediatrics team: Karen Smith! Karen has joined Sara and Theresa as a part-time receptionist and is happy to help our families with administrative needs. As always, Leann our office manager is also available to help resolve any administrative issues.



As a reminder, our receptionists answer calls on weekdays from 9 AM to 5 PM although we are closed from noon - 1 PM for lunch. Our receptionists also answer calls on select Saturdays and Holidays when the office is open.

After hours, do not hesitate to leave a voicemail message with any non-medical needs. An administrative staff member will respond the next time we are open. All medical questions after hours must be called into 508-747-8229 to page Dr. McAllister or the back-up doctor.

Details of our call policies and more can be found on our web site: www.PerformancePediatrics.com.

Sleep



Getting your child to fall asleep and to stay asleep are common problems for many families. There is no one method that will work for everyone, but there are three common guidelines all families should understand to help their children sleep.

Schedule: Having a consistent sleep schedule, including bed time, waking time, and nap times will help. Families who have chaotic or unpredictable schedules tend to have children with more sleep problems. Although the schedules can vary between families, depending on work schedules and temperaments, keeping consistent within your family will help. Toddlers can be very persistent in prolonging this schedule; they are masters in procrastination. Setting consistent rules and having both parents stick to the same set of rules will help children get to sleep easier.

Routine: Babies get used to falling asleep under certain conditions. If your baby always falls asleep with you walking her

and singing, then this is what she will need to have to fall asleep. So if she wakes up in the middle of the night she will need you to help her fall back to sleep. On the other hand babies who are put to bed sleepy but not fully asleep and comfort themselves into sleep will be better able to self sooth in the middle of the night.

Comforting: A regular night time ritual (bath, feeding, lullabies or story) can help a baby associate certain activities with sleep and help her body prepare to sleep. Starting at around one year of age a transitional object (blanket, stuffed animal, or other object the baby focuses on) will help the toddler to sooth himself and ease into sleep. It is never a good idea to let a baby fall asleep with a bottle (this can lead to early tooth decay and increase the risk of ear infections) and after about 4-6 months most babies will be able to sleep through the night without waking up for a feeding.

Understanding Medical Records and HIPAA

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or HIPAA, was enacted 12 years ago by Congress, partly to address the security and privacy of health data. As many of our families know, HIPAA is a major cause of confusion in doctor's offices across the country.



One of the most common misconceptions about HIPAA is that patients are allowed a free copy of their medical records. This is not true. Patients have the right to request a copy of their medical record, but medical offices have 30 days to comply with such a request and can also require that the patient cover the cost of copying and mailing the records.

If you feel that you have been the victim of a major violation of the HIPAA Privacy Rule, you can file a written complaint with the Office for Civil Rights at the Department of Health and Human Services. That office may choose to investigate complaints and impose fines.

For more information, visit the Office for Civil Rights - HIPAA web site: www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/.



Dr. Terence McAllister
Performance Pediatrics



Debit Cards

Starting on February 1, we are no longer using a PIN pad when processing debit cards. For families who wish to use their debit card, we will process it like any other credit card. If you have any questions about this or any other administrative policy do not hesitate to call us at 508-747-8277.

Effective February 1, 2009

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