



DELAWARE MODERN PEDIATRICS, P. A.

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AFTER-HOURS EMERGENCIES

We try our best to provide 24 hour a day availability for our patients who have emergencies. We feel that this is an important part of our practice. However, if you call us after hours, please keep in mind that you are calling our personal telephone number, not an answering service. We depend on the judgment of our patients as to what constitutes an emergency. We reserve the hours after the office closes for emergencies only.

If your child has become ill, and you feel that it cannot wait until the following morning, we need to hear from you right away and we will be happy to assist you. (Please have available the phone number and hour of closing of your pharmacy. Please also take the child's temperature with a thermometer.)

If you call from your cell phone, please be sure you are in a location with good reception. It will be frustrating in an emergency if we cannot hear each other properly.

If you need to reach a physician after hours, please be SURE that you are calling our main telephone number: 392 - 2077. Double-check your cell phone; if you have *any* other phone number recorded, you will reach an internal number that will sound legitimate but will not record a message. (This may occur if we call you from our office on any of our 8 phone lines, and you saved the number.) This is a feature of our phone system that we cannot disable.

Please DO NOT seek emergency care from an "urgent care" or medical aid unit. In general, they are not staffed by pediatricians; all too often, our patients are given a wrong diagnosis or wrong treatment by urgent care facilities. If you need emergency care after you talk with us, you will get better care from a hospital emergency room.

Examples of true emergencies include:

- Any infant under two months with a temperature over 100.5°F (38.1°C) rectally
- Severe abdominal pain for more than two hours
- Difficulty breathing (not just a stuffy nose)
- Convulsion
- Severe allergic reactions involving severe swelling or difficulty breathing or swallowing
- Vomiting for more than 8 hours, unable to keep sips of fluids down
- Possible fractures or lacerations possibly requiring stitches
- Severe earache

Examples of non-emergencies include:

- Older infants and children with fever, if the child is alert and responsive
- Difficulty breathing because of nasal stuffiness, cough and congestion
- Any illness which has lasted for several days
- A child who has been on antibiotics for several days and does not appear to be getting better
- Cough medicine refills, or refills for long-term medications

All of the above conditions are of concern, and certainly warrant a phone call. However, for most non-emergencies, we will be much better able to help you during regular business hours, when the nurses can assist us and we have your records available.

Please try to assist us in providing the most efficient care for your child. We are always ready to serve you.