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PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN

JANUARY 2011

Reprinted by:
K-State Research & Extension
Atchison County Office
405 Main/PO Box 109
Effingham, KS 66023
www.atchison.ksu.edu

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: VISITING THE DOCTOR

Yearly checkups are important for your child

Taking your child to the doctor when she is sick is usually not a problem. However, getting her there when she is well can sometimes be a battle. There are a lot of important things that happen at the doctor's office. When your child goes for a yearly checkup, the doctor will check to see if your child is growing the way he should be and make sure that he is well. During the checkup, the doctor may ask you questions and give you time to ask questions as well. This is a chance to talk to the doctor about your child and your child's well being.

Here are some of the things that may happen when you take your child to the doctor's office. Talk to your child about what may or may not happen so that she will not be completely surprised.



The actual checkup may start when your child gets called to the back offices. The nurse may come to get you and your child.

First, your child may have his height and weight taken. Then the nurse will take you and your

child to a room and may take your child's blood pressure and temperature.

- **Blood pressure** — there is a cuff on the arm that gets tighter and tighter. This

Continued on the back 

Talk to your child about what might happen so she knows what to expect.

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lets the nurse and doctor know how hard the heart is working to pump blood through the body.

- **Temperature** — the nurse will use a thermometer to take your child's temperature. Your child's temperature should be between 97 and 99.5 degrees Fahrenheit when she is feeling well. If the temperature is higher than that it may mean the body is fighting off an infection.

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The nurse may also check your child's hearing and eyesight. If it is determined that your child is having trouble with either his eyes or ears, you may have to take him to another doctor who focuses on those body parts.

All these measurements and tests will be recorded on your

child's medical chart which the doctor will look over before entering the exam room.

The doctor will come in next

When the doctor enters the exam room, she will probably ask your child how she is feeling and if there are any problems or concerns. Then she will start the check up. The doctor will listen to your child's lungs through a special instrument called a stethoscope; he will also look at your child's eyes, ears, nose, and throat.

Next the doctor may check your child's reflexes. This is done with a little rubber hammer that is tapped on the knee. Then your doctor will examine your child's body. The doctor might feel around your child's belly. There are a lot of important organs in the middle of the body and the doctor wants to make sure there are no problems.

At the end of the appointment, you may ask questions that you may have thought about during the checkup. Do not be afraid to ask the doctor any questions. It is assured that she has been asked many questions like it previously.

After your child's checkup, you will want to make an appointment for another checkup in a year.



REFERENCES:

- Kids Health. Sept, 2007 "Going to the Doctor." Nemours Foundation. www.kidshealth.org

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Written by: Nicole Peritore

Edited by: Connee Wheeler

Designed by: Rusty Manseau

Stock images: 123RF.com

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