

Good healthcare for children and adolescents begin with a well-child checkup and other services that help keep children healthy. These are considered preventative services. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has created a plan referred to as Bright Futures which helps doctors and families know what preventative services children should receive up to the age of 21, including tests, advice, and a vaccine schedule.

Because preventative care is important in keeping children healthy, the AAP and ACA (health care reform law) includes a rule that all preventative care services in Bright Futures and vaccine schedule must be covered by most health plans. This is not always true, as some older “grandfathered” plans are not required to pay these in full.

However, there are times when a child needs a service that is not considered preventative and is addressed during the well visit. If a child is not well or a new concern is presented during the check up, the physician may need to add an office (or sick) visit to care for the child. This is considered non-preventative and will be billed to your health plan in addition to the well check up. If you have a copayment, deductible, or coinsurance for sick visits, our office will charge you for this service.

Examples of services that may be provided and billed for, in addition to the preventative services include:

1. A problem which needs a prescription, test ordered, or changes in care for a chronic condition
2. Medical treatments (breathing treatments, etc. )
3. Any surgical procedure (splinters, removal of object from ear or nose, or wart removal)
4. Tests performed not included in the Bright Futures plan.
5. Addressing a medical issue that takes a significant amount of time, above and beyond what is expected during a traditional well visit

Your time is valuable and we want to make the most of each appointment for your child, which is why we will address your concerns that need a doctor’s care during the well visit, so that only 1 trip is necessary. Our intent is to prepare you for possible extra charges, and clarify that we must always bill for the services provided. Please let us know if you have questions or concerns regarding these services. We are happy to help you.