



Northeast Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine

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Dedicated to Wellness!

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Children Who Are Overweight

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Pediatric Obesity is a significant problem in the U.S.. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the number of children who meet criteria for being overweight, which is at or above the 95th percentile on BMI (Body Mass Index) growth charts, ranges from about 10% in infants/toddlers to approximately 18% in adolescents/teenagers.

Why is this a concern?

We are concerned about children being overweight because obesity is associated with a number of chronic diseases that are historically associated with adults. For instance, high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol, and type 2 diabetes are now observed with far greater frequency in the pediatric population. This puts these overweight children at increased risk for the early onset of heart disease and other serious health problems.

Isn't it difficult to assess obesity in children?

As children grow, we obviously expect them to gain weight. Therefore, to assess growth and weight concurrently, we use a measurement called the Body Mass Index (BMI). Pediatricians routinely check BMI as part of the standard health evaluation because this is our best tool for assessing whether your child is overweight or obese. The doctor will show you the BMI growth chart, which makes it easy to determine if your child's BMI is rising and if the growth pattern is cause for concern.

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Patient Satisfaction Survey 2010

Thank you to our patients and families who participated in this year's Patient Satisfaction Survey. Over the course of 30 days from mid-January to mid-February, we received 174 completed surveys.

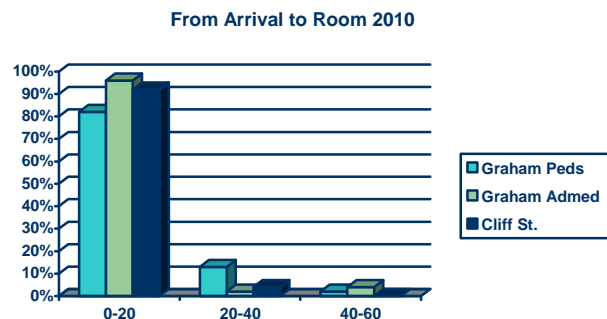
Patients and parents were asked to evaluate us in several areas including wait times, customer service, what they liked most about Northeast Pediatrics, and what they find most challenging about coming to Northeast Pediatrics. Finally, we invited families to provide suggestions for improvement.

We truly appreciated the honest feedback and recently used the findings in a practice-wide staff meeting.

Some survey highlights:

In 2009, 60% of our responses indicated that they waited approx. 0-20 minutes from arrival to room. That means that the rest of our responses sometimes waited for 20-40 or on rare occasions, 60 minutes!

As you can see in the graph below, our families reported shorter wait times in this survey; we continue to work hard to reduce our wait times to better care for our patients.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Children Who are Overweight
- 1 Patient Satisfaction Surveys
- 2 Triage Minute - Summer Camp Forms

Children who are Overweight

(continued from page 1)

Obesity is related to type 2 diabetes?

Yes, there is a strong association between obesity and the onset of type 2 diabetes (T2DM), a condition which is on the rise in children. The good news however is that when you lose weight, you can reverse T2DM. Often the doctor can identify the early indicators of T2DM, like insulin resistance, and the condition can be prevented.

What can parents do to help children maintain a healthy weight?

The best way to ensure normal weight in your kids is with a healthy diet and daily exercise. The American College of Pediatricians promotes the “5-2-1” Rule to prevent obesity. The rule stands for five servings of fruits and vegetables, less than two hours of screen time (e.g. computer, TV, video game), and at least one hour of physical activity, each on a daily basis. In addition, it is important that parents serve as healthy role models for their children. If your children learn healthy living habits from you early in childhood, these practices are more likely to become habituated later in life.

How can I help if my child is overweight?

Assess the child’s daily activity level. If it is limited, think of fun ways to increase it, such as joining a sports team, going for walks with the family, or just going outside to play. Focus on simple changes in terms of the food you provide. Eliminating juice, soda, and sports drinks can be a big help. Switch to whole-grain foods and be diligent about maintaining healthy portion sizes. Another trick to keep food from becoming a battle is to provide your child with options. For instance, let your child choose what he/she wants to eat, but make both options healthy (e.g. apple vs. orange). So your child doesn’t feel deprived, allow treats in moderation on special occasions.

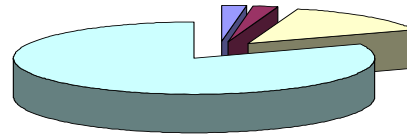


The changes your pediatrician encourages making with your overweight child are good guidelines for everyone. Importantly, these changes are more likely to hold if the whole family participates.

Check out our website, www.northeastpeds.com for past newsletters and other health and wellness information.

Patient Survey (continued)

When we asked patients to rate their overall experience at Northeast Pediatrics with the statement “Overall, my visit was positive”



74% Strongly Agree
13% Agree

2% Undecided
2% Disagree

Triage Minute

My child is attending summer camp and I just received forms that need physician signature. What should I do?

Many camps and summer programs require health forms. In order to serve you best, we ask that you follow these guidelines when requesting Camp Health Forms to be signed by our pediatricians.

- ✓ If your child has not had a Well Visit within the last year, we cannot vouch for their state of health. We will need to set up an appointment for a well visit before completing forms.
- ✓ Read the entire form. Fill in every blank for which you have information. That should include the history questions.
- ✓ If your child has complicated medical problems, complete the form and if we have questions when the physician reviews it, we will most likely be able to handle those questions with a phone call.
- ✓ For the safety of your child, we do not sign for “just in case” medications to be dispensed at camp. If your child takes medication on a daily basis that we have prescribed, we will be happy to provide any appropriate medication forms required.
- ✓ Please plan ahead when submitting camp forms as we need 7-10 days to sign and return them to you. Signed forms can be picked up at our office in the reception area. There is a \$10.00 fee per child for camp forms. **Tip: If you bring 3 Camp Forms for one child on one day, the fee is still just \$10.00!**