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Medical News

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SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

School is out, the sun is shining, and the beach is calling! It MUST be summer time at last. For most of us (especially the kids), the summer is a time to kick back and relax, without a care in the world...and we agree! Here are a few tips to make sure that your summer is fun-filled and safe:

- Remember your sunscreen: If you are going to be playing (or working) in the sun, be sure to apply and reapply a "broad spectrum" sunscreen. We recommend SPF between 30 and 50, and don't forget your face, neck, and ears!

- Infant Sun Safety: For infants younger than 6 months old, sunscreen use is limited to small areas, like the ears and face. For babies, we recommend avoiding direct sunlight as much as possible, especially between the peak hours of 10am and 4pm. And be sure to dress in light-colored clothing and hats.
- Stay Hydrated: Hot weather means excess perspiration, which can quickly lead to dehydration. A refillable water bottle is a must-have for every summer outing, and an environmentally-friendly way to get the recommended 8-10 cups of water per day.



- Wear appropriate safety equipment: We encourage kids to play outside as much as possible. Be sure to wear appropriate helmets and padding when riding bikes, scooters, and skates.

For more sun safety tips, check out the Environmental Protection Agency's SunWise website at www.epa.gov/sunwise.

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Important Phone Numbers

- Office Phone Number: 410-788-2350
- Office Fax Number: 410-788-6859
- Poison Control: 800-222-1222

PARENTING CORNER: SUMMER OF FUN

Now that school is out, parents often ask, "How can I keep my kids entertained without having to dip into their college fund?" Here are some great resources and ideas for simple, inexpensive (and educational) activities to prevent a boring summer.

We LOVE the idea of children playing outside. It provides exercise and allows them to use up all that extra energy without damaging

the fine china. Bike riding, sprinklers, sidewalk chalk, and water balloons are a great way to keep the kids busy in a safe and fun environment.

There are several museums in the Baltimore/Washington Metro area with free or low-cost admission. These include the Walters Art Gallery, the Baltimore Heritage Walk, Fort McHenry, and the Smithsonian museums. Also, the Charm City Circulator is a free way to get

around downtown, and it connects to MARC train and Lightrail!

Remember to check out your local library for summer reading activities and programs.

Finally, hobby stores like Michael's and Lowe's have craft workshops for kids and adults. Call the store for more details on schedules and pricing.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST

One of my favorite memories as a little girl was going to the Westview Drive-In Theatre with my family. We would pull the car into a vacant spot, and enjoy a double feature from the comfort of our mini-van.

The first drive-in theater in the U.S. opened in 1933. During their peak popularity in the 1950s, drive-in theaters were a common finding all over the country, and you didn't have to travel far to enjoy your favorite flick on a big outdoor screen. In the 70's and 80s, economic conditions and new innovations (like home videos) made the drive-in obsolete, and many theaters were forced to close.

Nationally and locally, these changes are clearly visible. The sign on Route 40 that once displayed the weekly movie times now says "Home Depot", and the enormous projection screen has been replaced with a do-it-yourself super warehouse. The drive-in theater has slowly, but surely become

an endangered species. Endangered...but not extinct!

Bengie's Drive-In on Eastern Ave. in Baltimore, is one of the few remaining drive-in theaters in the state! Since 1956, they have been providing inexpensive family entertainment for the masses. Recent movies on the 52' x 120' screen have included "Madagascar 3", "Battleship", and "The Dictator". This place is one of the city's best-kept secrets, and my family loves it!

Call or visit their website at www.bengies.com to see their house rules, and to check movie times, but in summary, here's how it works: You pay at the box office before you enter (paying one price per vehicle). Once you park the car, you can "tune in" to the movie through your car radio. Then just sit back and enjoy the movies, which is usually a double feature! And the best part? Not having to apologize to other movie-goers



Check out Bengie's Drive-In for some good old-fashioned family fun!

for a crying baby, a seat-kicking toddler, or a loud, crunchy snack.

Take some time this summer to give your kids a unique and fun movie-watching experience. It's these little "excursions" that create long-lasting memories.

*Bengie's Drive-In Theatre
3417 Eastern Blvd.
Baltimore, MD 21220
(410) 687-6627
www.bengies.com*

ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS: THE FUTURE IS HERE!

The wait is over! For the last few months, our office has been preparing for the transition to electronic medical records (EMR). We have now selected our new system, and have begun to implement various portions of it. The scheduling portion of the system is well underway, and we are now easing into the clinical/billing portions of it. For the doctors and office staff, this will require a complete restructuring of our office workflow, while still providing the excellent service that our patients are used to.

During this transitional period, we will be making adjustments to our schedule to minimize any inconvenience, so we need your cooperation. We are asking patients to arrive 5-10 minutes early for your appointments, so we can get your information updated in the new system. Also, please be sure to have your insurance card with you at

each appointment. As we implement the billing portion of the program, we will be scanning your insurance information into the electronic chart.



While the process of switching to the EMR is long, and requires a good amount of patience, we are confident that the change will be a good one. When the transition is complete, our

new system will allow us to:

- Send lab and radiology requests electronically
- Receive test results directly to a patient's chart
- Prepare referrals quickly
- Generate Immunization records immediately
- Eliminate excess paperwork
- And much more!

We are very excited about this project, and hope to have everything up and running soon!

OFFICE UPDATES

AFTER-HOURS PROCEDURE

We are pleased to have several new patients join our practice. One of the questions that everyone asks is “What should I do if my child is sick when the office is closed?” This is a great question, because every doctor’s office has a different system, and many patients have asked for general guidelines for our after-hours procedure.

When you call the office and we are closed, follow the prompts for the “after-hours mailbox”. The system will then give you 2 options, “urgent” or “not urgent”.

- **The “Urgent” Option:** This option pages the on-call doctor **immediately**, and should only be used for **emergency** problems, or if you are unsure of whether you need to go to the ER.
- **The “Not Urgent” Option:** You will be able to leave a message for the doctors. Messages are checked throughout the evening and on weekends when we are closed.
- **PLEASE NOTE**..If your child is having a **true medical emer-**

gency, you should hang up and call 911!

The chart below gives a few examples of after-hours scenarios, and when to use the appropriate option.



“Urgent” Option	“Not Urgent” Option	Regular Office Hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High fevers • Extreme pain (i.e. trauma, earache, etc), • Child very lethargic or irritable (Note: Any infant <2 months old is considered “High Risk”) • Child with underlying medical problem (i.e. severe anemia, asthma) • Wheezing/labored breathing • Severe diarrhea • Head trauma • Other acute events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild coughing • Sore throat • Mild vomiting or diarrhea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointments • Diaper rash • Prescription refills • Runny nose • Ongoing/Chronic problems • Referral requests • Billing questions
<p><i>*Of course, this table is not all-inclusive, but we hope it will be helpful*</i></p>		

OFFICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

HEALTH FORMS

Summer is our busiest time for school physicals and forms. We do our best to complete paperwork in a timely fashion. Bring in your forms as early as possible, and be sure to fill out the patient/parent portion of the form ahead of time. Please allow at least 1 week for us to complete the forms, and make sure we have your most updated contact information so that we can return your completed forms to you.

VITAMIN D SCREENING

Vitamin D plays a vital role in several body functions, including bone and kidney health. We get vitamin D in 2 ways– through our diet, and through sun exposure. Recently, there has been an increase in Vitamin D deficiency, especially among babies/toddlers. Therefore, our office will start screening for this essential vitamin at the 1- and 2-year well visits, along with the routine lead and anemia screening.

EVENING HOURS ADJUSTMENT

We have always made it a priority to see sick children as quickly as possible. We have decided to reserve evening hours for sick patients only, which will allow more appointment slots for our acutely ill patients. Effective immediately, we will no longer schedule well-visits in the evenings. We will continue to see sick patients, follow-ups, and shot visits during these times. Please note that this change does not affect patients who have already scheduled well visits.

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To the parent/guardian or patient



**We apologize if you have received this
newsletter in error. Please contact our
office for address changes or if you
would like your name removed from
our mailing list.**