



Blue Sky Pediatrics Asheville

Making every Child's day brighter by.....

doing yearly physical examinations

Newsletter

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SPORTS PHYSICAL AND A YEARLY PHYSICAL



As more and more schools are offering to do **Sports Physicals**, we felt like we should explain the difference between a **Sports Physical** and a **Yearly Physical**. Many adolescents and their parents believe that a **Sports Physical** is equivalent to a **Yearly Physical**, but this is not true. The **Sports Physical** is designed to clear an athlete for participation in sports while the yearly physical includes much more.

A **Sports Physical** usually includes a physical examination and a brief discussion of the child's medical history. Developmental and immunization histories, long-term health concerns and risk factors, and advice for developing a healthy lifestyle are **not** reviewed during a **Sports Physical**.

A **Yearly Physical** usually includes a complete physical examination (including vision and hearing screening), a discussion of the child's medical history, weight, height and body mass index, childhood nutrition, sleep habits, physical development and activity, social development and activity, cognitive development and academics, risks to health and safety, status of chronic conditions, immunization update, preventive health recommendations, and adolescent issues. It is also our opportunity to discuss important topics such as peer pressure, avoiding drugs, tobacco and steroids. It helps us to develop an open, trusting relationship with you and your child so you can turn to us with questions or concerns regarding puberty, normal development or any medical concerns.

To summarize the difference, there is no such thing as a quickie physical or just a simple **Sports Physical**. Eliminating recommended components of the yearly physical is poor quality care. We follow the American Academy of Pediatrics Bright Future Schedule that includes the recommendations relating to the frequency and general content of **Yearly Physicals**. The people doing the **Sports Physicals** do not follow these guidelines.

PRICING DIFFERENCES

With the new insurance regulations that are now in effect, most insurance companies will pay for **Yearly Physical** examinations in full. This, of course, depends on your individual policy and we suggest you contact your insurance company if you aren't sure what your policy covers. The schools charge a small fee to perform the **Sports Physical** stating that it is "cheaper" than going to see your regular doctor. They also may say that a percentage of the fee will be donated back to the sports program at the school. The reason they charge this fee is because most insurance companies will not pay for a **Sports Physical** because it simply doesn't exist and is not recognized as good care for the patient. If this was good care, then the insurance companies would not hesitate to pay because it would be cheaper for them than a full **Physical Examination**. Honestly, if you want to donate to your child's sports program at school, we recommend doing this in some other way that doesn't possibly jeopardize the health of your child.

FILLING OUT SCHOOL FORMS

If you need to have a participation form filled out and your child has had a yearly physical examination in the past 12 months, we can complete this form for you without your child needing to have any other type of physical done. We will complete the form based on the most recent yearly physical examination. If you drop off the form, please fill out any sections that are "parent" sections. We cannot fill out our part unless your section is completed first. Please allow 7 business days (Monday-Friday) for your form to be completed. If you require the form sooner than the 7 business days, please call our office to ask about that the charges for urgent requests. If you allow us the 7 business days, these forms are filled out for you at **NO CHARGE**. If you do not have the **Yearly Physical** done in our office, we will not be able to complete any forms you might need at any other times during the year, including camp forms.

WHAT WE REQUIRE

The doctors at Blue Sky Pediatrics want your child to be as healthy as possible. We feel that regularly scheduled **Yearly Physicals** help to ensure that your child is growing and developing well. These visits allow us a chance to find and treat any concerns early. In order to remain an active patient with Blue Sky Pediatrics, you must bring your child in for a **Yearly Physical** examination. These visits help your child learn how to take responsibility for their own healthcare.