

Watchung Pediatrics Messenger

Spring Issue

2019



In April, Watchung Pediatrics celebrates a milestone. Our doors opened twenty-five years ago and you welcomed us into your community, entrusted us with the care of your children's health and wellness. Nurse practitioners were not particularly common in private practice in 1994. With the support of Dr. Andrea Katz and Dr. Susan Barasch, we worked together to build a comprehensive pediatric practice. It is a tremendous privilege to care for others. Behind the exam room door, I have come to know many of you and I have cherished that relationship. Therefore it is with mixed emotions that I, Kathleen Dempsey, announce my retirement from active private practice May 31, 2019.

Watchung Pediatrics has grown from a small office in Watchung to a large, 3-office practice with many skilled physicians, nurse practitioners, and staff. We pride ourselves in the care we offer to our patients. Prior to private practice, I worked in pediatrics at Children's Memorial in Chicago and Columbia Presbyterian in NYC. I provided care to homeless children and families in crisis in Jersey City and taught at an alternative High School for women. I also taught in the College of Nursing for Rutgers University. I always preferred working directly with children and families. I could not have imagined a more fulfilling and satisfying 40-year career. I plan to stay in NJ and continue to enjoy my volunteer work and community choir.

I thank you for your loyalty, your patience and our relationship. I leave you in the care of many bright, thoughtful, and caring colleagues. I wish you the best of health and success for your children and families.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Dempsey, APN

The providers and staff at Watchung Pediatrics want to thank Kathleen Dempsey for the exceptional care and service she has provided the families and community at large since the doors of Watchung Pediatrics opened 25 years ago. We will miss seeing you daily, but are so happy you will have more time to spend with family and be involved in the other community/service projects you enjoy.

Wishing you a Happy Retirement from all the providers and staff at Watchung Pediatrics!!

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****ALLERGY ALERT****

Remember to please start your allergy medications as the season is upon us.

[1994 – 2019](#)

[This April is our 25th Anniversary!](#)

We are happy to have been serving the children and families around Warren, Fanwood, Millburn and surrounding areas for the past 25 years.

Please help us celebrate by writing a positive review for us on Yelp or Google or voting for us on NJ Family's Favorite Kids' Doc website:

<http://www.njfamily.com/vote>

Thank you!

MMR Vaccine & The Measles Outbreak

Since the start of 2019 alone, there have been 159 confirmed cases of measles in 10 states around the United States. Almost all of these cases are unvaccinated children. These outbreaks have been considered a public health emergency throughout the United States especially because in 2000, it was declared that measles had been eliminated.

Measles is a highly contagious virus that can be spread through coughing and sneezing. If a person with measles coughs or sneezes the virus can remain in the air for up to 2 hours. Measles is so highly contagious that 90% of the people who are around an infected person and are not immune (have not been vaccinated) will become infected. There can be many serious complications in all age groups but especially in children younger than 5 and adults older than 20. 30% of reported measles cases have one or more complications. Some of the complications include ear infections, diarrhea, pneumonia (which is the most common cause of death from measles in young children), and encephalitis (swelling of the brain). As this disease is a virus, there is no treatment or cure. The only way to prevent your child from getting infected with the measles is to have your child immunized with the MMR vaccination.

The MMR vaccination protects against three diseases: measles, mumps, and rubella. This is a two-dose series, the first given between 12 and 15 months and the second between 4 and 6 years of age. This two-dose series is about 97% effective in preventing your child from contracting measles. This vaccination is the ONLY way to prevent your child from getting measles. Before the vaccine, 3 to 4 million people were diagnosed with measles each year. Since the vaccine was introduced in 1963, it has led to a greater than 99% reduction in measles cases. Measles is still a leading cause of death worldwide, especially in countries where the vaccine is not available.

Multiple studies have been done to disprove the link between this vaccine and autism. Most recently, a study published on March 5, 2019 studied over 650,000 children born between 1999 and 2010. This study “strongly supports that [the] MMR vaccination does not increase the risk of autism, does not trigger autism in susceptible children, and is not associated with clustering of autism cases after vaccination”.¹

In addition to this, multiple studies have been done to show that vaccines will NOT cause your child harm. Most have very mild side effects. The side effects of the MMR vaccination are a sore arm or rash at the injection site, fever, or swelling of glands in the neck. These side effects can begin immediately after the shot and up to 2 weeks later. People occasionally faint from medical procedures including vaccinations which is why it can be important to sit or lay down for 10 minutes after vaccination if feeling dizzy. Most importantly, if reading online about vaccines, please be sure to use reputable sources.

Watchung Pediatrics STRONGLY recommends vaccinating your children on time. It is the ONLY proven way to keep your child and others who may not be able to receive this vaccine safe and well.

¹ Hviid A, Hansen JV, Frisch M, Melbye M. Measles, Mumps, Rubella Vaccination and Autism: A Nationwide Cohort Study. Ann Intern Med. [Epub ahead of print]. Doi: 10.7326/M18-2101

Good Sleep Hygiene

It is extremely vital for children and adolescents to get a proper amount of sleep. It has been found that children who get the right amount of sleep each night generally have better behavior, memory, mental health, and school performance. Quality sleep can also help support a stronger immune system. The chart below from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Sleep Medicine shows how much sleep your child needs in a 24-hour period.

Recommended Amount of Sleep for Pediatric Populations*

Age	Recommended Sleep Hours per 24 Hour Period
Infants: 4 to 12 months	12 to 16 hours (including naps)
Toddlers: 1 to 2 years	11 to 14 hours (including naps)
Preschoolers: 3 to 5 years	10 to 13 hours (including naps)
Gradeschoolers: 6 to 12 years	9 to 12 hours
Teens: 13 to 18 years	8 to 10 hours

*The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has issued a Statement of Endorsement supporting these guidelines from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM).

Source: Paruthi S, Brooks LJ, D'Ambrosio C, Hall W, Kotagal S, Lloyd RM, Malow B, Maski K, Nichols C, Quan SF, Rosen CL, Troester MM, Wise MS. Recommended Amount of Sleep for Pediatric Populations: A Statement of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine. *J Clin Sleep Med.* 2016 May 25. pii: jc-00158-16. PubMed PMID: 27250809.

The key to having a full night of rest is to practice good sleep habits, also known as sleep hygiene. One of the most important aspects of having good sleep hygiene is to remove any electronic devices from the bedroom and to turn off all screens at least 1 hour before bedtime. In addition to that, the environment of the bedroom is important. Make sure the room is quiet, dark, and relaxing by dimming lights early and keeping toys out of the bedroom. It is essential to keep the bedroom a place that is associated with sleep and not with playtime. It is important to have a healthy diet and active lifestyle during the day to have proper sleep hygiene. Make sure to not eat big meals, caffeine, or sugary drinks right before bed. Lastly, one of the most important components of having good sleep hygiene is to be consistent – go to bed at the same time every night and wake up at the same time every morning.

There are multiple signs of poor sleep quality. Some of the signs that your sleep quality needs to improve is if it takes you more than 20 minutes to fall asleep after getting into bed or you spend less than 85% of your time in bed asleep. Other signs of having poor sleep quality are frequent arousals during the night, extremely restless sleep, or waking up tired despite sleeping for an appropriate sleep duration. Lastly, having sleep apnea (if you pause in your breathing while snoring) is a big sign of having poor sleep quality. Please notify your provider if you notice these signs.

How to Talk About: BODY SAFETY

- Teach children the proper names for body parts.
- Talk about safe and unsafe touch. This talk should include hitting, being asked to touch someone else, or someone else touching them. Explain how no one is allowed to touch or ask to see the parts that are covered by their bathing suit. Others shouldn't show them or ask them to touch the parts that their bathing suit covers.
- Explain this means they are allowed to say no to anyone who makes them feel unsafe; this includes men, women, and children. Have your children practice saying NO in a strong, firm voice. In general children are taught to not say "no" to adults, but they also should learn this rule does not apply when they don't feel safe.
- Talk to your child about different feelings: fear, sadness, guilt. Children are able to identify things that make them feel sad, bad, yucky. Help them understand if people (adults or children) do things to make them feel this way they should tell an adult as soon as possible.
- Teach them that their body is really smart and can give signs that something may not be right: their heart is beating really fast, they feel sick in their tummy, they have sweaty palms.
- Make a list of 5 trusted adults (responsible people > 16 years old) that they could talk to. This list could include a parent, older sibling, teacher, grandparent, or a church or clergy member.
- Discourage secrets: Secrets that make people happy like a birthday present or a surprise party are okay to keep. Secrets that make them or someone else feel sad are not okay. Encourage your child to always tell a trusted adult.

PCMH Matters!

Meet Our Staff: Our Patient Care Coordinator

Our patient care coordinator, Laura, plays an integral role behind the scenes at Watchung Pediatrics. Laura, who calls the Fanwood office her home base, assists our patients in a variety of tasks.

One of her most important roles is to ensure our office has continuity of care with each patient. This means having a comprehensive view of all aspects of your child's care including ER visits, urgent cares, specialists, etc. She is able to see which specialist reports we have not received and then goes on to contact our patients by either phone or patient portal to follow up if the child has seen the specialist that our provider referred them to. This follow up then either serves as a reminder to parents to make the appointment with the specialist and see them or as a reminder for us to contact the specialist with the appointment and patient information in order to keep updated with the specialist's recommendations for the child.

Laura also can assist in helping patients obtain appointments with specialists that they are referred to, especially if there is a long wait time for an available appointment or the parent/patient has difficulty contacting that office.

In addition to that, Laura helps parents who have difficulty navigating and obtaining services or trying to find a support for a new diagnosis. She does this by connecting them with medically accurate website information, other parents support, or parent advocacy agencies.

Laura is a great resource for our patients. If you feel that Laura may be able to assist you in any way, please feel free to contact her.

ANTIBIOTIC OVERUSE

Why does it seem like it's so hard to get an antibiotic around here???

In the past, antibiotics were given out for almost everything when people went to the doctor. As medicine has progressed, we have learned more about the impact that multiple doses of antibiotics have on our bodies. This is especially important in children whose immune systems are developing. Research has shown that multiple doses of antibiotics in infants and young children has been associated with an increased risk of food allergies, asthma, resistant bacteria, and intestinal infections.

Antibiotics don't discriminate. They wipe out both the bad bacteria that causes infections and the good bacteria in our intestines that is the frontline for our immune system.

Frequent use of antibiotics increases your risk for contracting an illness from bacteria that develop resistance to typical antibiotics. This means that they don't respond to the first-line antibiotics meaning that stronger antibiotics will be needed more regularly and there might be a point where all antibiotic options have been exhausted. The CDC states the increasing emergence of antibiotic resistance is one of the top 10 threats to global health in 2019.

Most infectious illnesses that children, teens, and even parents encounter are typically viral. Viruses can cause cold symptoms, high fevers, vomiting, diarrhea, rashes, severe coughing, sinus pressure, and even some types of ear infections or pneumonia. Viruses don't respond to antibiotics. The good news is our immune system is pretty good at fighting off viruses by itself. Rest, eating healthy, drinking plenty of fluids, and being up to date on vaccinations are the best things to help give your immune system the tools and time it needs to fight off these viruses.

There are only certain types of infections that require antibiotics and will respond to them well. These include:

- Pneumonia
- Strep throat
- Urinary tract infections
- Some ear infections
- Some sinus infections
- Some skin infections

Most colds or coughs do not need antibiotics. The color or thickness of nasal discharge does not determine if there is a bacterial infection. Green mucus just means more white blood cells are present in your mucus but does not necessarily mean there are bacteria. Cough and colds can last 2-3 weeks. It can be frustrating to be sick for this long, but in the long run being put on an antibiotic when it is not needed is actually detrimental to your child's health.

The providers at Watchung Pediatrics can help give you tools to help manage the symptoms with viruses and also inform you on the signs to look for that would indicate a more serious infection.

Our Providers:

Nurse Practitioners & Medical Doctors

Since the founding of Watchung Pediatrics, nurse practitioners have been providing primary care to our patients and families. At Watchung Pediatrics our pediatricians and nurse practitioners work collaboratively to provide the best healthcare for our children and families.

Nurse Practitioners are registered nurses who have advanced education and training in a specialty area, such as pediatrics. NP's have a master's degree and are board certified in their specialty. They provide a full range of pediatric care from birth to age 21. Nurse practitioners can diagnose and treat common acute illness and injuries, prescribe medication, and order and interpret labs and diagnostic testing. Pediatric trained nurse practitioners can also diagnose and treat mental health conditions in children and teens, such as depression, anxiety and ADHD.

Physicians and NPs are similar in that both diagnose, treat, and manage acute and chronic disease but do so from different perspectives. Our nurse practitioners were already skilled RNs before going on for advanced education and training in advanced practice. NPs make ideal primary care providers because of their holistic and wellness orientation that emphasizes health education, preventative care and risk reduction. Families appreciate that nurse practitioners spend time discussing concerns as well as education in growth, development, and prevention of health problems.

For over 50 years, pediatric nurse practitioners have been enhancing the healthcare of children and families. Watchung Pediatrics trusts that their NPs provide the highest level of care to our families.



Kids Korner

How to Make Window Clings:

Materials:

- Clear plastic sheet protector
- White craft glue (like Elmer's)
- Liquid food coloring
- Liquid dish detergent
- Small paint brush
- Cookie cutter (optional)

Instructions:

1. Draw a picture and put it inside the plastic sheet protector or use a cookie cutter. Or just wing it.
2. Mix 2 tablespoons of glue with food coloring. Add 2 drops of dish detergent until you get a color you like.
3. Paint on the sheet protector to make your picture. Paint a semi-thick layer and make sure the different colors touch so it makes on solid piece.
4. Set aside to dry overnight.
5. When dry, peel off sheet protector carefully and then stick it to a window. You can peel it off and stick it to another glass surface as much as you want.



taken from teachingmama.org

Resources:

Have you visited our state-of-the-art website?

In addition to information about our offices, medical staff, providers and services provided, our website includes such useful features as a user-friendly Pediatric symptom checker, a library of medical information with content from the American Academy of Pediatrics, a **"What's Going Around"** section that contains information about community news, separate sections with information geared for teens and children with educational games for kids, as well as **Dr. B's** blog and social media feeds. All this can be found at:

<http://watchungpediatrics.com/>



Are you a member of our LISTSERV?

Want to receive timely emails from Watchung Pediatrics with the latest news and updates including Flu vaccine arrival, appointment availability or office closures? Then please visit our website to sign up for the Watchung Pediatrics' LISTSERV.

Important Resources

Infant Care and Expectant Parent Classes:

wpseminars@gmail.com

Referral Requests: 908-755-5437 x Opt #4

To enroll in the appointment reminder system:

wpconfirmations@gmail.com

Have You Seen Our App?

Our Watchung Pediatrics mobile app that enables our families to have access to our website and all of its wonderful features when at home or on the go!

Please follow these instructions on how to download the app to your smart phone:

1. Search for **Your Practice** in the app store and download the app (later you will choose Watchung Pediatrics)
2. Open the app and search for Watchung Pediatrics
3. Choose Watchung Pediatrics
4. Connect with Watchung Pediatrics anywhere, anytime



Have you signed up for our portal?

Save a call or trip to the office by accessing your child's medical records through our secure portal at

<http://watchung.pcc.com/portal>. Our new patient portal is easy to use and lets you communicate with us at any time and from anywhere!

You can sign up for the portal by calling our office or by sending an email to wpportal@watchungpediatrics.com with your name, your child's name, and their date of birth. If your child is over the age of 18, their consent is needed for you to have access to their portal.