

THE DIRT

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New Patient Portal Accessibility and Usability

We love you having access to your child's records. In 2018 we want to learn more about the portal and hopefully make it work better for you. In the coming year we'll add features that make it easier for you to contact your provider via the portal as well as schedule appointments. Stay tuned!

The Return of GP Classes

Free classes for GP families will begin again this month with the Newborn Prep class starting Monday, February 26 at 6:00pm in our conference room. This class, taught by Dr. Carter, is geared to first time parents but anyone expecting a new little one can attend. Although the class is free to GP families, please go to our website to register by Friday, February 23.

Courtesy Text Appointment Reminders

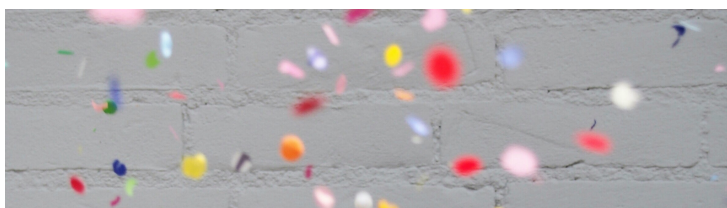
Beginning this month, we will no longer be giving courtesy phone calls, and instead will be sending a courtesy text on the day prior to your appointment.



Our 10th year!

"When you've got a dream, you've got to grab it and never let it go." - Carol Burnett

December 1, 2008, Garden Pediatrics opened its doors at our original location across from RCH. We didn't have any patients. But we had a dream and a plan and eagerly developed a dynamic group that keeps striving for the best. 2018 marks our tenth year and we want to spend it celebrating with you by refocusing on our mission, improving our innovations and having fun with you as we move forward! Each month we'll be focusing on a new advance or improvement goal. In January, we tackle appointment times and scheduling to be effective in February (please see article later in the newsletter).





Laser for Lip and Tongue Ties now done in office!

Dr. Carter is now certified in the biolase laser and can perform frenulectomies in the office. She has performed lingual (tongue) tie releases since 2007 and in 2017 received laser training to correct labial (lip) ties as well as more posterior tongue ties. Based on our informal screening (google), she is the only pediatrician in Southern California that performs all of these procedures.

According to Dr. Kotlow, DDS, a national expert in this area, physical symptoms of tethered oral issues include:

- Lipstick-shape nipples after the infant latches
- Flattened, blistered, bruised, cut, or bleeding nipples
- Moderate to severe pain when your infant attempt to achieve a latch
- Infected nipples
- Plugged ducts
- Mastitis
- Nipple thrush
- Engorged or un-emptied breasts

If you have concerns, call today for an evaluation!

We also feel strongly about making a positive difference in our world. We want to do this personally. Our hope is that you will feel cared for and loved with every interaction and then that spirit will be passed on to the next person you associate with and on and on. Collectively, let's be slower to get angry, quicker to forgive; slower to argue, quicker to look for common ground; quicker to smile, laugh, hug.

Corporately, we also want to look for ways we can to spread positive energy and advocate health and wellness. Garden Pediatrics is **starting our own T-shirt line** that in our small way will help us do that. We will use high quality, renewable materials that we assure you will be comfy cozy. Each month we'll announce the phrase for the shirt and will do a contest for the design. Contestants can be anyone - patients, parents, or friends of GP; and at the end of the month, we'll choose the winning design. The shirt will be available for purchase the following month. The winner of the chosen design will receive a monetary prize, a free t-shirt with their design and a modeling gig demonstrating the new T to be used on our website where it will be sold (in addition to being able to purchase it in the office). The January slogan is: "This Little Light of Mine". Like the old campfire worship song says, "This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine", let 2018 be a year where we commit and demonstrate to our families, to share the best of ourselves and help our world change for the better. Contest rules and submissions will be available on our website by the second week of January. The contest deadline is January 31 at midnight!

Thank you for being a part of our GP family for over the last (nearly!) 10 years. Let's continue to grow together!

Cameo Carter, MD *Garden Pediatrics Owner*



New Appointment Scheduling Protocol

“Always listen to your heart. It may be on your left, but it is always right.”

Thank you to all the parents that take time to tell us what they like about their care as well as the service they receive at Garden Pediatrics. Our world has become too full of criticisms and negativity. It's the norm to give a yelp review when someone's unhappy. Thank you for those that have taken an extra minute to yelp something positive or to give a boost in the surveys or to mention a name of someone who's gone out of their way for them! Those positive words have reverberating and multiplying effects.

Thank you also to the people who have responded to our surveys with something they'd like done better. Dr. Carter reads each of these and addresses them with all involved persons. Starting this year, we will also address every comment together as a group. For positives shout-outs, we already tell it out loud to the team on the spot and put a marble in our large marble jar in the back office (look for the jar next time you're in!). When the jar is full, we celebrate with a team dinner out. If there's a negative or constructive comment, we'll discuss it together in a monthly staff meeting, come up with action items to address and then respond to the person with the concerns with how we've handled it.

The biggest detractor we keep hearing is how much our families don't love our appointment check in timeline. Currently, if your child's appointment is at 10:00am, your provider is not due into the room until 10:20. This policy was started a couple of years ago for really good reasons. It takes some time to room a patient. There's often a copay up front, sometimes there's an insurance verification issue, and then there's time needed to take vitals and measurements, vision and hearing screening, etc once you get into the back of the office. So, having a 20-minute prep time before the provider comes in made a lot of sense. But, it is hugely unpopular. There's a perception that the provider is often running late. Already, if you're appointment was at 10:00 and the provider is in at 10:20, many feel that the provider is already late, even though we're on our schedule. If a provider IS running late, even by a few minutes, the perception is the lateness is the 20 minutes + whatever additional time has collected.

So, we've decided to go back to what the industry standard seems to be and **plan on you seeing your provider when the appointment time is**. This will be effective February 1st. Our goal is for your child to be seen by the provider at the appointment time. Please try to arrive 10-15minutes prior to your child's appointment time to make this possible. As you can see above, there's a lot that needs to get done prior to your doc or PNP coming in the room. In order to help keep us running on time, please do the following:

- **Arrive 10-15 minutes prior to your appointment time**
- **Bring your insurance card and ID card to the window when you check in**
- **Be ready to pay your copay at time of visit. If your insurance is not valid, it is necessary that you pay for your visit prior to being seen.**
- **If you're running late, call. We'll do everything we can to fit you in.**

We know how hard it is to wait with your little one and we try really hard to see you on time. We can't always help running late, but we're hoping this helps. Let us know what you think and how it works for you!

✦ Your providers: Your GP team

Flu Alert!: It's not too late to get your flu shot. While early evidence is that the protection isn't one of our best years, it's still better than none and flu cases have drastically risen over the last two weeks. Call and schedule your visit today!