

HAPPY JULY AND 4th OF JULY WEEK!

July has always been a fun month in my family as my mom, dad, son and I all have July birthdays which means lots of cake! Swim team was very big where I grew up, as each neighborhood had a pool and each of the 120 neighborhood pools competed in the Northern Virginia Swim League (NVSL). I swam from age 5-18, coached summer league swimming in VA and NC from the ages 18-27 and have had kids on the Glen Oaks team since 2010, with Alexis working as a junior coach for the first time this summer. I truly believe that I learned more about child psychology from coaching and teaching than I did from any class in college or graduate school!

SPEAKING OF CHILD PSYCHOLOGY...

Swimming is one of the few sports that explicitly teaches kids from a very early age that the harder you work in practice, the better you perform in meets. If you work incredibly hard in soccer practice, you might do better in the game, but you also might play a vastly superior team and the final score may not reflect your effort at practice. In swimming, the child is swimming the exact same distance each meet and as they work harder and their technique improves, their times get faster and faster. Swimming teaches the great life lesson of focusing on things you can control. I would tell my swimmers that you never worry about who you're swimming against because you have no control over that. The kid swimming next to you could be swimming for their first time, or may be heading off to Olympic trials next week. Your only concern is beating your best time. New swim team parents would be puzzled when a child would jump out of the pool, smiling with arms raised despite finishing last (and the child that finished first may actually have looked disappointed) until they learned that our focus was on personal bests, and that child who finished last had lowered his time by 2 seconds and the child that finished first had not improved his time. The families who understood the value of helping their children focus on personal bests had kids who worked harder in practice, were always asking about ways to improve their technique and their steady improvement in swimming usually carried over to school as well. The families who couldn't see beyond what place their child finished in each race tended to have kids who didn't put forth much effort in practice and almost always quit swimming (and most other sports) by the time they were 13.

BE CAREFUL THIS 4th OF JULY

No one ever wanted to work the night shift on the 4th of July in a pediatric ER due to all the gruesome injuries that come in that night (and the fact that July is the first month for brand new residents who "kind of" know what they're doing after 4 days in a hospital). I had one of my former patients lose a thumb and two fingers after picking up a firecracker that hadn't gone off. Just keep kids a good distance from the fireworks!

OFFICE CLOSURES

- The office will be closed on the 4th of July, but I will be available for any patients who need to be seen as I'll be around- just text me
- I will be out of town from Saturday July 27th through Saturday August 3 for my wife's family reunion in North Carolina. I'll be available by text and telehealth and can manage any medications and any paperwork from NC

NEW OFFICE THINGS

- We added an upgraded pulse oximeter to measure infant oxygen levels in the upcoming Fall/Winter respiratory viral season
- We placed our first two orders with LabCorp this week. While we can do 98% of the labs that you need in the office, every now and then a lab will need to be obtained that we don't have in the office (thyroid labs for example). With Hannah, our medical assistant also being a talented phlebotomist (a person who can draw blood), your child can have their blood drawn here in the office and it can be sent to LabCorp, saving you a trip to an outpatient lab or ER to have your child's blood drawn. While you (and/or your insurance) are responsible for fees associated with LabCorp labs, the charges from LabCorp will be WAY cheaper than labs drawn through a hospital system

DINING WITH THE DOC

As I hope everyone has recognized, Direct Pediatrics is not your typical pediatric practice and I'd love for our office to combine 2024 technology and expertise with the feel of an old-fashioned community doctor's office. With this in mind, I'd like to invite all families to stop by the office on Fridays at 7pm for "Dining with the Doc." Norton Commons hosts Food Truck Fridays right outside our office on Fridays from 7-9 through September 27th. Grab some food from the food truck (or bring your own) and come eat with us on the Direct Pediatrics patio. We'll get the corn hole boards out and some other games for the kids (and parents). There's usually a different band playing every Friday evening as well.

CHECK-UPS & SCHOOL/SPORTS' PHYSICALS

- Check-ups are recommended yearly starting at age 3
- The public schools require school physicals for children entering kindergarten, 6th grade and any time a child moves to a new school.
- Sports' physicals are required annually for anyone playing a school sponsored sport and are good for 1 year.
- Since we don't use insurance at Direct Pediatrics, you don't have to wait 365 days for your child's check-up/school physical/sports' physical. You can do it whenever you'd like!
- If I've done your child's check up within the past year, you don't need to come in for a separate school physical or sports physical. I do the school physical and sports' physical at every check up. Just message me and I can send you your child's school physical/ sports' physical paperwork
- Outside of 7/27-8/3, I should be able to do your child's check up/school physical/ sports physical at any time if you need it done this summer
- I **NEVER** want a child to miss a day of school, tryouts, or practice due to not having required paperwork. If you're ever in this situation, text me and we'll meet in the evening or weekend to get this done

As always, please let us know if there's anything we can do to improve your family's experience!