



# PORTOFINO PEDIATRICS

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Welcome,

Thank you for choosing Portofino Pediatrics for your child's care. Our physicians and staff appreciate the trust you have placed in us and look forward to developing a long and healthy relationship with you and your child(ren). Our goal is to provide exceptional care in a comfortable, welcoming and unique environment for children.

At Portofino Pediatrics, we know that when we treat a child, we treat a family as well. We believe that in every visit, phone call or procedure we partner with our families in the care of each child.

Parent and patient education is always a priority in our dedication to promoting the health and well being of children and their families. Whether your visit to our office is due to an illness or to monitor growth and development, Portofino Pediatrics is ready to guide parents through the journey of raising children. Our team's goal is to *treat* your child well, *make* your child well and help your child *stay* well during their lifetime. We accomplish this by teaching children at a young age the importance of healthy habits.

All of our pediatricians are board-certified, with many years of experience. The providers and the rest of our staff that make up Portofino Pediatrics all share a common mission. They desire to make a difference in the lives of children and feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to do work they love.

For your convenience, we've included a patient registration form, a medical history form, HIPAA privacy form for you to complete before your child's appointment, along with information about our office procedures. We've also included a brochure about our practice and its philosophy and services.

We look forward to greeting your family and working together to achieve your child's optimal health. If you have any questions now – or after you've become a part of our practice, please do not hesitate to call me. My direct line is 305-246-1030 and my mobile number is 305-205-1453  
Portofino Pediatrics remains.....*with you, for your child...for years to come.*

Sincerely,

Dr Nivia Vazquez

Practice's Owner and Administrator

## **NEW PATIENT CHECKLIST**

- Make sure Dr Nivia Vazquez is listed as the Primary Care Physician (PCP) with your insurance company.
- Arrive 30 minutes prior to your appointment time in order to complete the necessary paperwork.
- You must bring current shot records for **any** type of appointment and insurance card for first appointment or insurance information.
- Your child will not have an actual chart until the first visit. You may sign a records release at that time to have their records from a previous doctor sent to us.

**Cancellations** – Please call at least 24 hours in advance to cancel an appointment. We are a busy practice, and this will enable us to make use of this time for sick children.

**No Shows** – For each “no show” or missed appointment, you will be charged a fee of \$5-20 dollars. This fee is your responsibility, not that of the insurance company. After 2 missed appointments we will send a letter reminding you of the importance of cancelling appointments.

## **INSURANCE AND BILLING**

Your contract with your insurance company requires you to pay your *co-pay* at the time of service. Failure to do so is considered a breach of contract between you and your insurance provider. We gladly accept cash and checks. If your insurance company requires that you meet a *deductible*, we will collect for services in full until that deductible is met. We will also collect at time of service, any percentage which your insurance company tells us you must pay. This *co-insurance* amount can be a percentage of the allowed charge. When payment is received from insurance, we will discount any amount our contract requires. You may then owe a small amount or have a small credit at your next visit.

If your family is covered by two insurances (i.e. both parents work and both have insurance), the second insurance often does not pay the portion which the first insurance makes due from you (for example co-pay or co-insurance). Our policy is to collect the lesser of the two insurance’s patient obligation at the time of service. Again, after both insurances have addressed the claims, you may owe a small amount or show a small credit. State law governs which insurance is primary and which is secondary, this is not a choice which you can make, nor one which we can make. Please check with both insurances if you are in doubt. You must disclose all insurances that covers your child(ren) at the time of service.

Be aware of your insurance coverage. Some insurances do not cover well child exams and immunizations, yet these services can be quite expensive. Feel free to discuss with us payment options and other options for immunizations if your coverage presents a problem. Currently, the practice accepts most insurances and is accepting new patients.

If you receive a bill and have questions, please call our billing office between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., M-S (305-246-1030). Please understand that it is your responsibility to know your insurance coverage. Call us as soon as your insurance information changes. If we don't have current information, claims may be denied and you will be held responsible for payment. Only custodial parents will be entered as responsible parties for minors despite divorce decrees or judgments. As you can understand, we are unable to become involved with these sensitive issues. If your account is past due and is sent to collections, your children are terminated from the practice. We make every effort to contact you before resorting to collections; please keep us advised of new phone numbers or address changes.

## **MEDICAL RECORDS**

**To Another Doctor** – Please sign a records release for outgoing records in our office. We will make a **summary** of your child's chart and send them to the new physician free of charge as a professional courtesy. Please allow one week for the entire process.

**To Hand Carry** – Or if the entire chart is requested to be sent to another doctor for change of PCP, our fees for releasing patient records are \$25 for the first 25 pages, and \$0.50 for each additional page. We will send you a statement for the copied records. If records are needed "immediately," an extra fee of \$5.00 will be added for priority mail status or more immediate pick up. If records are picked up at the office the fee must be paid at that time. Please keep in mind it takes up to a week for records to be copied and mailed. Immunization records are always available from your child's chart and Florida Shots website of the Department of Health. Any fees incurred are the responsibility of the parent/guardian or patient if over eighteen years old.

**From Another Doctor** – Please sign a records release for incoming records in our office. If we receive them before your child has an appointment, we will hold the records for up to a year.

## **RECORD STORAGE**

We will hold records as active for 3 years with no visits. After 3 years, they are placed in storage. We can retrieve records from storage on a weekly basis. **Please remember to take your child's shot records with you when you leave the practice for any reason.**

## ***FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:***

### **DO I NEED AN APPOINTMENT?**

If your child is sick and you are not sure if you need to see the doctor, our nurses will be happy to advise you (established patients only). Please follow these steps:

**IF YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY – PLEASE CALL 911.**

If it is not an emergency, leave a message with the receptionist detailing child's symptoms. You will be transferred to the on duty nurse or will receive a return call from one of the nurses/medical assistants as soon as they are finished taking care of scheduled patients. Please be aware that if your question requires an answer directly from a doctor it may take more time.

### **WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO MY APPOINTMENT?**

It is our policy to verify your demographic and insurance information at each and every visit to help insure your claims are processed quickly and correctly. Although it may seem burdensome to you, it is extremely important to our billing process.

Please present your insurance card and co-pay at sign-in for each and every visit. If you do not have a current insurance card, you will need to get all billing information prior to your appointment in order for us to bill your visit. Unless we have the card or the billing information your account will be considered private pay. If any information has changed since the last visit (insurance, address, phone number) you must fill out an information form to update our records. Please help us by informing us of any change as soon as possible.

Please bring to the appointment your insurance plan booklet. The information contained in the booklet will help us expedite follow-up and referral care for your child.

### **CAN I JUST HAVE A PRESCRIPTION?**

Antibiotics are powerful medications for specific infections and can sometimes be overused. It is our physician's policy not to prescribe medications over the phone if we have not seen your child for the specific illness/problem.

If you have an existing prescription that requires a refill, **please call your pharmacy** to request the refill. They, in turn, will call our office for approval. The office will OK the refill or contact you for additional information. No refills on medications will be made by the physician who is on call for the evening or weekend. No controlled medication can be called into the pharmacy. By law, these must be written prescriptions handled only by your provider. Patients on Continual medications will require rechecks every 4-6 months as directed by their Physician.

## **WHAT IF MY CHILD NEEDS TO SEE A SPECIALIST?**

We do have a referral department to communicate with your insurance. In order for the referral process to go smoothly, please do the following:

- You must first see one of our doctors for the problem.
- Know and understand your insurance.
- Which hospital(s) / laboratory / x-ray facility can you go to?
- Are you required to have a referral in order to see a specialist? To have diagnostic testing done?
- Who are the doctors / therapists / home care facilities that your insurance plan endorses?

### **Call for a referral and allow AT LEAST one week for processing.**

Special consideration will be made in the event of an emergency. If you need to go to the ER, Pediatric After Hours Clinic, or urgent care facility, our on-call doctor can take care of referring you to the correct facility; however, you must call our office on the next business day so we can contact the insurance company for a referral.