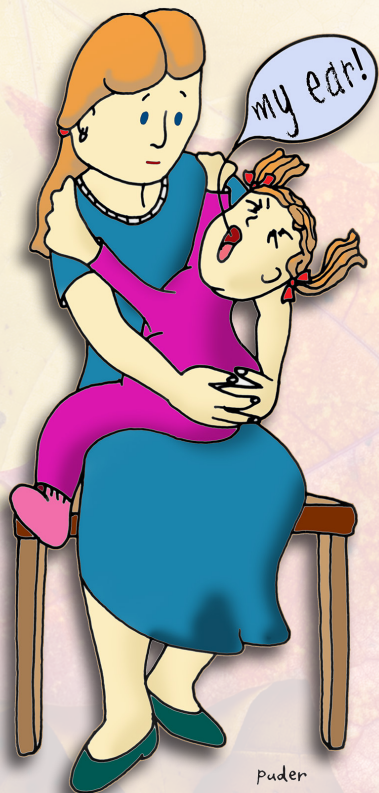
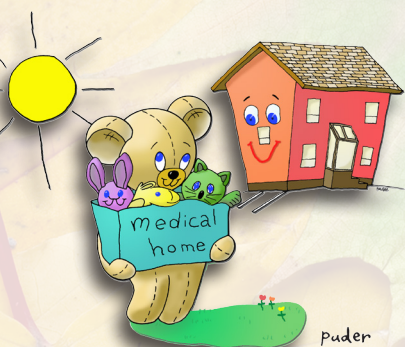


# SHOULD I TAKE MY CHILD TO AN URGENT CARE CENTER?

by Doug Puder, MD  
and Jeff Karasik, MD



We know that Urgent Care Centers are opening up all over Rockland County. Is it a good idea to use them after hours? Most of the time our answer will be no.

Clarkstown Pediatrics is open 7 days a week, 365 days a year! We open at 8am Monday through Saturday and at 9:30 on Sunday. We also provide evening hours Monday through Friday. We are always available 24 hours a day for urgent telephone advice if needed.

We believe in the concept of a *Pediatric Medical Home* for your child. Our hard work in providing this resulted in the highest national certification of our practice (NCQA level III, for more detail see article on our website). We are a group of board certified pediatricians and nurse practitioner who will see your child, we have your child's full medical record and the ability to follow-up on any tests or problems we diagnose. It helps to have doctors who get to know your child!

At many Urgent Care centers, your child may not be seen by a pediatrician, they will not have your child's medical information, your child will likely be new to them, and treatments may be different than what we would recommend.

If your child suffered a laceration after hours, it would be appropriate to urgently visit an emergency room or an urgent care center. For problems such as earpain, there is no need for a late night urgent visit but rather a discussion about pain relief. It is not urgent to begin an antibiotic. Sore throats should also wait until our office opens. This will provide far better tracking of the number of strep or other infections your child develops, often avoid unnecessary antibiotics, and helps us should further action be needed (such as an ENT referral.)

We feel that parents should call us first to discuss the need for an urgent care or emergency room visit after hours. Very often we will be able to reassure you that your child's problem can wait until morning.

If your child does have what appears to be a life threatening problem (not breathing, etc.) call 911 immediately! Urgent Care centers provide an alternative to a hospital emergency room for truly urgent medical problems, but they should not be viewed as an extension of our office for non-urgent illnesses.

• Nanuet (845) 623-7100 • New City (Eckerson) 352-5511 • Stony Point 786-5776 •

We hope you find our Parentletter helpful and informative. Please keep in mind that receipt of this newsletter does not create a doctor/patient relationship and that it is not meant to serve as a substitute for professional medical advice. For particular pediatric medical concerns, including decisions about diagnoses, medications and other treatments, or if you have any questions after reading this newsletter, we encourage you to speak with your child's pediatrician.