

Question of the Week:

Why does my child need “Well Child” check-ups if he’s not sick?

By Angela D’Alessandro, D. O.

Well child check-ups are an important part of your child or adolescent’s health care. It is at these points-of-care with your physician that you are able to discuss all of the important aspects of your child’s health and well-being. The well child visit is a good time to bring up questions regarding your child’s development and behavior, to check on how much they have grown since the last visit and to receive scheduled vaccinations. A “sick visit,” in contrast, focuses on a specific problem, such as ear pain or a sore throat. Well child check-ups encompass many aspects of a child and adolescent’s well-being, including: nutrition, growth, academics, behavior, development and safety guidelines related to your child’s particular age. A well child visit provides the “garden” in which the relationship between doctor, child and family grows. These visits focus on the key ingredients to promoting a child’s physical, social, emotional and developmental health. To get the most out of your visit with your physician, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends jotting down a few questions beforehand with regards to areas of interest or concern for you and your family. This is great way to start a dialogue with your physician. Is it time for your check-up?

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