

# PATIENT INFORMATION



**Richmond Pediatrics**

Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine

*... for over 40 years*

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## **WELCOME**

The physicians and staff of Richmond Pediatrics welcome you. It is our intention that you receive high quality medical care in a personal setting and in an enjoyable manner. The purpose of this booklet is to provide some information and guidelines to enable all of us to achieve these goals.

## **HISTORY**

Dr. William Forney founded the original clinic for pediatrics on this site in 1964 and practiced continuously until his retirement in 2000. The office space was originally housed in what is now the “old” building (presently Richmond Clinic for Internal Medicine). Shortly after Dr. Wahl joined the practice, the larger present area was built in 1972 and has undergone several remodels since. Dr. Bill Schnall joined the practice in 1976 and retired in 2006. The current physician staff, in addition to Dr. Wahl, includes Dr. Giselle Falkenberg joining in 1992, Dr. Jeff Ernst in 2000, Dr. Annie Reese in 2004, and Dr. Varun Jhaveri in 2006.

## **PHYSICIAN STAFF**

***Dr. Harley Wahl*** was born and raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He graduated from Lake Forest College, Illinois, and attended the University of Wisconsin Medical School. Upon graduation in 1963, he began a three-year internship/residency in Pediatrics at the University of Washington, Children's Orthopedic Hospital and Harborview. Two years were spent in the Air Force as a Captain while serving as a pediatrician at Tyndall A.F.B., Florida. One year was spent in Seattle in a nephrology (kidney) fellowship at the University of Washington before entering private practice here in Richmond Beach. Dr. Wahl lives in Innis Arden with his wife, Melinda. They have three adult children: Bryan, Erik, and Amy.

***Dr. Giselle Falkenberg*** grew up in Germany, and was transplanted to the United States as a teenager. She studied History and Literature at Harvard College, went to Boston University Medical School, and trained in pediatrics at Dartmouth Medical Center in New Hampshire. As a medical student and resident, she worked in Haiti, Nepal and on an Indian reservation in Arizona for pediatric clinical and public health work.

She moved to Seattle to join her husband, a foot doctor and long distance runner. Two years of preventive medicine training with the University of Washington and Centers for Disease Control included lengthy trips to central Africa before joining Richmond Pediatrics. It is the families in this clinic, along with her own two young children, Tzuria and Naphtali, who continue to teach her the most valuable lessons in pediatrics and adolescent medicine.

Dr. Falkenberg takes a special interest in breast-feeding, allergies, and adolescent medicine. She serves as a consultant to the Washington State Health Department and the Shoreline School District. Favorite pastimes include reading alone and with her children, dancing, mountain scrambling, and running.

***Dr. Jeffrey Ernst*** was born and raised in Olympia, Washington. His undergraduate years were spent at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma where he graduated Phi Kappa Phi and Cum Laude with a degree in Natural Science. Before medical school at the University of Washington, he served as an admission counselor at Whittier College in California. During medical school, he and his wife, Jennifer, traveled to Kenya, Africa for a medical mission to Tenwek Hospital. Residency in pediatrics

was completed at the University of Washington and Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center. His children Lindsey (1998) and Preston (2002) add much joy and exuberance to their lives, and have added immense insight to his practice of pediatrics. Personal interests include biking, hiking, and piano playing. As of this writing, the Ernsts are awaiting the arrival of their third child.

**Dr. Annie Reese** was born in Chicago and raised on the East Coast. She migrated west for college at Stanford where she graduated with a degree in American Studies and was elected into the Phi Beta Kappa society. For a year before starting Stanford Medical School, she counseled and organized after-school activities for homeless youth at Seattle Emergency Housing Service. During medical school, she traveled to the Philippines for 6 months to conduct public health research. She completed her residency at Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center in Seattle.

Professionally, Dr. Reese enjoys the diversity of general Pediatrics and its opportunities for lifelong learning. She has special interests in both breastfeeding and adolescent medicine. On a personal level, she is fascinated by the daily growth and development of her son Liam (2003) and daughter Cora (2006), spends time hiking, telemark skiing, reading novels, cooking, and gardening with her husband, Scott, and their dog, Mila.

**Dr. Varun Jhaveri** was born and raised in Seattle. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa, Cum Laude, and with College Honors from the university of Washington, receiving a B. S. in Mathematics. Following college, Dr. Jhaveri lived and worked abroad in Paris, London, Dublin and Bombay (Mumbai) prior to attending medical school at Rush Medical College in Chicago. He went on to complete his pediatric residency at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center in Los Angeles.

Dr. Jhaveri comes to Richmond Pediatrics after having started his career with Virginia Mason on First Hill. He lives with his wife Berit in the Maple Leaf neighborhood of Seattle and enjoys traveling, cooking, running, spending time with family and playing guitar/writing music with his band.

Dr. Jhaveri is Board Certified and is a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics. From a professional standpoint he values the challenges and joys of general pediatrics and welcomes new patients to his practice.

## **PEDIATRICS AND ADOLESCENT MEDICINE**

Pediatrics as a specialty has evolved to include not only the care of the newborn and child but the adolescent as well. We enjoy the continuity of care and welcome seeing patients from birth through the college years.

While most people identify a doctor visit with “illness”, there are two other important areas of expertise: The first is an increasing awareness and concern for “wellness care” - the “well baby visit”, preschool exam, kindergarten preparedness physical, and school, camp and sport check-ups. The second is the evolving area of “consultation.” While we are not pediatric psychiatrists, we would enjoy helping you explore the area of “behavioral pediatrics” which encompasses life’s daily family problems. We would encourage you to make an appointment to discuss these concerns as they might arise.

## **FACILITIES**

In addition to our ten examination rooms (two designed specifically for adolescents), there is an “emergency room” designed for repair of lacerations, removal of foreign bodies, wart treatment, simple fracture care, etc. Our on-site laboratory can handle most routine blood, urine, stool, and culture samples with the remainder being transported elsewhere. Our X-ray facility is adequate for most routine pediatric problems, but there will be times when tests and procedures will necessitate travel to Children’s Hospital.

## **NEW PATIENTS**

We welcome new patients - newborns and/or families from out of town. If you have medical records (immunizations, hospitalizations, chronic illness, consultations, etc.) from another physician, it would be most helpful for continuity of care to obtain copies for our use as soon as possible.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

For anticipated appointments (recheck, physicals, etc.) we request that you try to schedule, with the physician of your choice, at least two to four weeks in advance. We realize that most illness-related visits are of more sudden onset and encourage you to call for an appointment as early in the day as possible. We try to leave room in our appointment schedule to see “illness” calls as timely as possible - but obviously some days will be busier than others and you may be given an appointment for several hours later. We have an absolute, firm, inviolable rule, however, that all patients are seen for illness on the day they call. There is no “waiting until morning” except by your request. One physician is on call each evening and is willing (and planning) to stay until all patients are accommodated. If you need to have a family member seen “today”, please make that clear to our receptionist when you call. We strongly discourage “walk-ins”. Please just call first!

Every valiant attempt is made to stay close to our arranged appointment schedule. Emergencies (broken bones, lacerations, severe illness, hospital calls, etc.), of course play havoc with good intentions but our most common cause for being delayed (and thus falling behind for the remainder of the day) is the late arrival of patients for scheduled appointments and/or patients bringing multiple children to be seen for a single appointment “slot”. We strongly urge your consideration in this matter in deference to others.

There is a charge for patients who fail to show for (and do not cancel) scheduled appointments or who call to cancel AFTER their appointment time. “No shows” prevent other patients from being seen on a timelier basis.

Our office is open Monday through Thursday from 8:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. and on Friday from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. In addition, we are open on Saturday mornings for urgent care. The evening hours are especially designed for the convenience of working parents. We are happy to schedule rechecks, physical, etc. in the evening as well as seeing patients for illness.

## **TELEPHONE ADVICE**

You are welcome to call anytime during regular office hours for health related information and/or advice. Our nursing staff will either talk with you immediately or return your call as soon as feasible. We have an automated “telephone tree” answering system with ten incoming lines. You may select to speak directly to the receptionist for an appointment or to the nurse, referral coordinator or accounts manager. If the nurse is not immediately available, please leave her a message and your call will be responded to within the hour (if we are open).

Some problems are not appropriate for telephone diagnosis and our nurses, in their best judgment, will ask you to make an appointment. Most rashes are virtually impossible to diagnose by telephone - so please bear with us. Certain problems will require physician discussion for which there is usually a “telephone consultation charge”. These calls will usually be returned at the lunch or dinner hour, or at the earliest possible break in our schedules.

We will be glad to refill selected medications by telephone during regular office hours. This is only appropriate in very special selected circumstances. Some medication refills require written prescriptions. We need a minimum 24-hour notice to process these requests accurately.

## **EMERGENCIES AFTER REGULAR OFFICE HOURS**

In the event of poisoning (such as ingestion of pills, chemicals, alcohol, or unknown substances) call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.

For other emergencies occurring after regular hours, call our office phone number (206) 546-2421. Our phone does not accept messages but you will hear a recording with instructions for contacting the after-hours pediatric triage nurse. The nurse will consult with you and/ or the physician on-call regarding your child’s care. Consulting with the triage nurse or physician may be helpful and save you time even if you are certain that your child requires emergency room care. There is a nominal charge for consulting the triage nurse after office hours.

If you have any other questions about after hours care, please do not hesitate to ask us at the office.

## **HOSPITALIZATIONS**

Newborns - Our primary hospital affiliations for the care of newborns are Northwest and Stevens Memorial. We also see newborns at Swedish Hospital, First Hill or Ballard. A colleague close to the hospital campus usually attends deliveries at other hospitals. We will be glad to discuss these arrangements on an individual basis.

Serious Illness - Infants, children, and adolescents who require hospitalization need the sophistication of care available only at Children's Hospital or at Swedish Medical Center. Other local hospitals have no in-patient pediatric wards.

## **COMPLAINTS & PROBLEMS**

It is our goal to strive not only for medical excellence but also for understanding, sympathy, and compassion. There are numerous people involved in the overall care of each patient - receptionist, nurse, physician, lab, x-ray technician, and accounts manager. Together we interact with 100 to 200 people per day and we each, undoubtedly, have our "better" days. While we may be busy, we attempt to give personalized, individual, appropriate care to each person.

Please let us know how we need to improve because your constructive concerns will enable each of us to grow more adept in our service to you.

## **BILLING & ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES**

New patients to our clinic are asked to establish credit by either paying for their first office call at the time of their appointment or providing us with full insurance information. All other patients with established credit accounts have the option of paying at the time of the visit or being billed at the end of the month.

Our Accounts Manager will work with you to facilitate insurance billing when feasible as we directly bill most insurance companies. However, you are ultimately responsible for the remaining balance on your account. A finance charge may be levied on all unpaid balances outstanding greater than sixty days.

Special arrangements can and will be made for persons experiencing financial difficulties if you would just please let us know of your problems in a timely manner. At the physician's discretion, patients have been and will continue to be seen on a "no fee" basis.

# Local Health Care Facilities

