



An Urgent Message from East Cobb Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine

Dear ECP Family,

As you are aware, we are experiencing a surge in Covid-19 cases related to the Delta variant. Unlike other waves of the virus, this one is causing a dramatic rise in pediatric infections. Consequently, this surge has generated a tremendous strain on our pediatric medical system, and **we are at a tipping point.**

These past few weeks, East Cobb Pediatrics has had a sharp increase in Covid related visits, whether for acute illness, concern for testing, or potential Covid exposure. Our healthcare team - doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses and staff - are working diligently to address this increased demand.

These are unprecedented times and we recognize the stress placed on families as they work to keep their children healthy in the midst of this pandemic. These concerns have translated into an overwhelming increase in phone calls to our practice, with some days phone nurses answering more than 400 calls per day. We kindly ask for your patience as we work to return these calls as soon as possible.

In this regard, we find it necessary to make a few temporary adjustments in the upcoming weeks in order to provide the care needed for our sick patients. We will be reaching out to families to reschedule well-child visits that do not have associated vaccines or immediate medical concerns. We will work to schedule these once again in the fall.

In addition, we are asking parents to help us with this volume. We ask that if your child's symptoms have only recently begun and/or their symptoms are mild, that you consider monitoring at home for 48 hours before seeking medical attention. In addition to Covid, we are seeing an increase in overall typical childhood viruses at this time.

Our entire staff is working to schedule additional hours to accommodate this demand, however, there are limits to the number of patients which can be seen while still maintaining the high standards of care we strive to provide. We recognize local urgent care centers and emergency rooms are equally busy but there may be times we will have to refer you to their care.

Unfortunately, our vaccination rates in Georgia, and Cobb County specifically, are low and the Delta variant has proven to be a formidable opponent. In addition, we were disheartened to hear that several local schools and districts opened without the bare minimum of mitigation strategies in place to protect our students. Accordingly, we have seen an increase in Covid cases in our school aged children. We have written letters and voiced our concerns and will continue to do our part to advocate for the health and safety of our patients.

We are hopeful that these conditions are temporary, but **their duration depends on you, us, and our entire community.** We ask that all of our ECP family do the following:

- 1) **Vaccinate if eligible** - (currently available for ages 12 & up) - encourage loved ones to do the same
- 2) **Wear a mask** - when in public, at school, in small or large gatherings
- 3) Continue to **maintain physical distancing** measures when able
- 4) **Stay home** if you are feeling unwell
- 5) Limit indoor entertainment activities
- 6) Encourage your schools, workplaces, and places of worship to **be cautious** and follow local and federal guidance with regards to mitigation strategies

East Cobb Pediatrics is committed to caring for our families. We are humbly asking for our community to work with us in doing so by doing your part to mitigate the spread of Covid.

We thank you for being a part of our family and look forward to overcoming this challenge together.
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