Considerations for Well Child Exams during the Coronavirus Pandemic

During the COVID-19 pandemic, routine pediatric preventive health care visits remain essential to monitor a child’s growth and development, as well as administer appropriate immunizations. However, with the rapidly changing restrictions around in-person visits, guidance has been issued around prioritizing in-person appointments, as well as offering telehealth appointments.

The Department of Health Care Services released a notice on 4/24/20 outlining the recommendations of Well Child Care during the pandemic. Following the guidance of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), well child exams should continue based on Bright Futures periodicity.

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However, with restrictions of in-person visits, AAP outlines prioritization of in-person appointments, as well as guidance on use of telehealth for care. Please review their site for the latest recommendations:

AAP Guidance on Providing Pediatric Well-Care During COVID-19

AAP Guidance on the Necessary Use of Telehealth During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The San Francisco Health Directive (2020-20c) issued on November 6, 2020 outlining Ambulatory Care Services, also indicates that care is to continue to be offered remotely to reduce in-person visits. Please see Appendix A, section 2, of the directive for Prioritization of Care recommendations:

SF Ambulatory Care Health Directive

San Francisco Providers are encouraged to check the San Francisco Department of Public Health website routinely for updates on any directives or health orders for guidance. Visit: www.sfdph.org/healthorders and www.sfdph.org/directives

Medi-Cal allows for providers to conduct well child exams via telehealth, and providers can be reimbursed for this type of visit. Families should be notified, however, that parts of the comprehensive exam will need to be completed in person, when allowed. This in person visit is considered a continuation of services from the initial telehealth encounter, and should not be billed as a separate visit. Please visit the Medi-Cal website for more information on the telehealth policy and billing procedures:

Medi-Cal and Telehealth
https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/provgovpart/Pages/Telehealth.aspx

DHCS Telehealth Resources
https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/provgovpart/Pages/TelehealthResources.aspx

Resources:

Well-Child Visits During Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic (DHCS, 4/24/2020)


Guidance on the Necessary Use of Telehealth During the COVID-19 Pandemic (American Academy of Pediatrics, 11/03/2020)
Teledentistry During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Regular preventive dental check-ups are an important part of overall health. Thus, the American Dental Association continues to encourage necessary preventive dental care during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, in order to facilitate preventive dental care, teledentistry is an effective way to triage patients, evaluate the medical/dental problems, and prioritize in-office visits. Dental professionals can utilize teledentistry via a variety of technologies to deliver virtual dental care and educational services.

Below are some common methods of teledentistry:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synchronous (Live Video)</th>
<th>Asynchronous (Store and forward)</th>
<th>Remote Patient Monitoring (RPM)</th>
<th>Mobile health (mHealth)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Live, interactions between a patient/caregiver/family members and provider or between providers using audiovisual devices such as phone or video chat.</td>
<td>Sharing recorded health information such as radiographs, pictures, video, or any digital images/information relating to the patients.</td>
<td>A patient’s health and personal information/data are collected at one location electronically and the information is sent to the provider at a different location to provide care or for supportive care.</td>
<td>Health care and public health practice and education supported by mobile communication devices such as cell phones, tablet computers, and personal digital assistants (PDA).</td>
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During the COVID-19 pandemic, many dental offices/clinics including UCSF and Silver Avenue Family Health Center are offering teledentistry to provide necessary dental care and limiting office visits to reserve them for those patients who need in-office treatments. It is important to encourage patients to continue with their preventive routine dental care and inform them about teledentistry options, especially if they are reluctant to attend in-office routine dental care.
Women, Infants & Children is Open

WIC is currently and continues to be open for services. Due to COVID-19, WIC is providing services to participants via the phone and online. Please continue to refer your Medi-Cal eligible patients age 0-5 years.

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**Website:**  
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https://www.sfdph.org/dph/comupg/oprograms/MCH/CHDP.asp

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HAPPY holidays
From the SF CHDP Team