

WHAT TO EXPECT...

The CAC refers all children who are suspected victims of abuse for a medical exam by a specially trained medical provider at Pediatric Care Specialists.

The medical provider will perform a physical exam to assess your child's health and well-being. She will look for signs of injury or trauma to the body, and depending on the results of the examination, may recommend a follow up exam, treatment, or additional testing. Digital photographs may be taken in order to assure quality care and the physician will review this with you and your child. Throughout the exam, every effort is made to ensure that your child feels comfortable and at ease.

The medical provider will also assess your child's emotional well-being and may refer your child to counseling or therapy.



“The medical provider will assess your child’s physical health and emotional well-being. They will assure your child that their body is okay.”



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INFORMATION GUIDE FOR
CAC MEDICAL EXAM



**CIRCLE OF SUPPORT
CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER**
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Why was my child referred for a medical exam?

- To ensure the health and well-being of your child.
- To reassure your child that everything is okay with his or her body.
- To treat identified medical conditions
- To document any possible physical injuries.
- If your child has injuries, a medical opinion is sometimes provided about how the injuries happened (by accident or on purpose).

Will I be allowed to go into the exam room with my child?

Having a medical exam is stressful for most children even under the best of circumstances. Therefore, if age appropriate, your child can decide if they would like a caregiver, nurse and/or CAC advocate present for the exam.

The CAC advocate is available to attend the medical exam with you and your child and will discuss this with you during your CAC appointment. The medical provider and a nurse will typically be in the room for the exam.

Will the medical exam hurt?

No. The exam is a head to toe physical exam which includes: a vital signs check, lung exam, head and neck exam, abdominal exam, neurological exam, and a check of your child's reflexes. This exam may also include touching or "palpating" parts of your child's body (like abdomen) to feel for anything abnormal or concerning.

The entire exam typically takes a few minutes and is conducted at a pace that is comfortable for your child. If your child feels uncomfortable at any point, the provider will take immediate steps to relieve your child's stress or discomfort and will stop the exam if requested to do so.

Will "evidence" be collected during the medical exam?

If your child is a victim of suspected physical abuse, the medical provider or nurse may take digital photographs to document any identified injuries to your child's body. These photographs may be provided to the investigative team. The medical provider will let you know if or when photographs need to be taken and will make sure that your child is comfortable throughout the process.

What types of testing or treatment may be recommended?

Any additional testing or treatment will be discussed with you during the medical exam. If the medical provider identifies an injury or medical condition that requires additional treatment, she may recommend additional testing such as x-rays, lab work, or an appointment with a specialist.

The medical provider may provide your child with a prescription for an antibiotic or other medication when necessary, to help prevent infection or treat an identified medical condition. Your child may be scheduled for a follow up appointment with the medical provider.

When will I know the results of the exam?

The medical provider may be able to discuss the results of the medical exam immediately following the exam. Please keep in mind that over 90% of the time, there are NO visible signs of injury or trauma. This is NORMAL and does NOT mean that "nothing happened" to your child. The most important aspect of the medical exam is to assess your child's well-being and to assure your child's body is healthy.

Typically, medical providers follow a 'no news is good news' policy and therefore will NOT call you unless necessary or if a follow up appointment is needed. However, if you would like to inquire whether test results are back, you may do so as soon as one week after the exam.

Who receives the information from the medical exam?

During your CAC appointment, you (and your child if he/she is 14+ years old) will be asked to provide a brief medical history and to sign releases of information for Pediatric Care Specialists. The medical report and documentation of any injuries will be provided to the CAC and investigative team members.

The CAC advocate is available to answer any questions you have regarding this process. If you have any additional questions about your child's medical exam, you can contact the CAC at 814-254-4567 or Pediatric Care Specialists at 814-266-8840.