



UNC Family Medicine Patient Newsletter

August 2022

Updated Hours for Urgent Care Clinic

Please note the updated UNC Family Medicine Center Urgent Care hours. We strive to provide all people in our community access to the same high standard of care and due to staffing shortages will need to temporarily reduce hours.

Effective August 1, 2022, new hours of operation are:

8:00 am - 7:00 pm, Monday - Friday

12:00 pm - 5:00 pm, Saturday and Sunday.

URGENT CARE CLINIC HOURS UPDATE

UNC Family Medicine Urgent Care is announcing a temporary change to hours of operation. This change ensures that urgent care shifts remain covered and that we can continue to provide all people in our community access to the same high standard of care.

Effective August 1, 2022, new hours of operation are:
8:00 am - 7:00 pm, Monday - Friday
12:00 pm - 5:00 pm, Saturday and Sunday.

We regret the need to reduce hours of operation and aim to restore normal hours of operating by January 2023.

UNC HEALTH (984) 974-0210 **UNC**
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Family Medicine

We regret the need to reduce hours of operation and aim to restore normal hours of operating by January 2023. Feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

COVID Vaccinations – Available for Children Under 5 at Family Medicine

In case you missed it, COVID-19 vaccines for children under 5 have been approved by the FDA and CDC. Both the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines for this age group have been found to be SAFE and EFFECTIVE and we recommend these vaccines.

At the Chapel Hill location, we will be offering a limited number of appointments for the Pfizer three-dose series for children 6 months-4 years old. Appointments can be scheduled through MyChart or by calling the clinic.



COVID VACCINES FOR YOUR CHILD! 
6 months - 4 Years of Age!

COVID vaccines are now being offered at
UNC Family Medicine for children 6 months to
4 years of age.

Appointments are available on Wednesday
afternoons!

If you would like to
schedule an
appointment, please
contact UNC Family
Medicine at:
(984) 974-0210

The best way to make sure you and your family are protected is for everyone to get fully vaccinated and boosted! For children 4 and older as well as adults, local pharmacies continue to be a convenient way to get your COVID-19 vaccines and boosters. Appointments and available locations can be found using tools from the NCDHHS. <https://takemyshot.nc.gov/> and <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/vaccines>. For children of all ages, your local health department may also have appointment options available.

To find out if it is time for you to receive a booster, visit:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html#when-you-can-get-booster>

COVID Treatments Available Through Family Medicine

Unfortunately, COVID-19 infections continue to affect our everyday lives. For people at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19, the medication Paxlovid is one treatment option. To best serve our patients with timely access to this medication, we are offering virtual appointments to see if Paxlovid is right for you.

If you have COVID-19 symptoms and test positive, please schedule an appointment through [My UNC Chart](#) or reach our office by phone at (984) 974-0210 to schedule a visit.

We care about you – with the very contagious BA.5 COVID strain currently keeping numbers up, we recommend you wear a mask indoors in public spaces and get tested if you find out you have been around someone who has tested positive for COVID. Let's all do our best to take care of each other and protect those most vulnerable to this still dangerous contagious disease!

Let's Talk Health with Drs. Dana Neutze and Kevin Mensah-Biney



Dana Neutze, MD, PhD



Kevin Mensah-Biney, MD

Chlamydia Screening and Prevention

Chlamydia trachomatis is the most commonly reported *bacterial* sexually transmitted infection (STI) in the United States. Chlamydia infections often do not have symptoms, so many people do not know that they are infected. The disease is treatable with antibiotics when diagnosed; however, there are no vaccines or long-term immunity to chlamydia, so reinfection is still possible. As an infection spreads through sexual contact, safe sex practices are important for prevention. This includes, but is not limited to, using protection such as condoms or dental dams.

CHLAMYDIA FACTS

SYMPTOMS

- Symptoms include pain during urination, discharge, lower belly pain, or pain during sex.
- Possible to not have symptoms.

SCREENING - Annually

- Swab, usually from the genital area (the urethra or the vagina), or a urine sample, which may not be as accurate.
- Screening is recommended for all sexually active women 24 years or younger, and in women 25 years or older who are at increased risk for infection (new or more than one sex partner).

COMPLICATIONS

- Can cause scarring in female reproductive organs, leading to infertility, chronic pelvic pain, ectopic pregnancies, or pelvic inflammatory diseases (PID).

PREVENTION

- Prevention includes the use of condoms, dental dams on bodily members and objects used during intercourse.

TREATMENT

- Can usually be effectively treated with antibiotics but must be treated early to prevent long term effects.

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Importance of Screening

Even though many chlamydia infections do not have symptoms, they can still have long-term effects on reproductive organs. Some possible symptoms include pain during urination, discharge, or pain during sex. Chlamydia infections can cause scarring in female reproductive organs, leading to infertility, chronic

pelvic pain, ectopic pregnancies, or pelvic inflammatory diseases (PID). The best test for chlamydia is called a nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT) which is done similarly to a COVID test. NAAT is best performed with a swab to collect a sample in areas of possible infection. In women, this can be done along with a routine Pap smear or pelvic exam. NAAT can also be done with a urine sample, which can be the more comfortable option, but the results may not be as accurate. The best method of testing can be discussed with your doctor.

Who Should Get Screened?

Chlamydia infections are most common in young women and girls between the ages of 16 and 25, so screening is generally recommended for high school and college-aged women and girls. Despite its sensitive nature, it is important to consider screening a normal part of an annual checkup, as you would any other part of your health. Sexual health is health – screening is not a criticism or judgment. Like other contagious diseases, it is an important way to find and treat infections to limit spread and prevent long-term issues. As is the case with all your health care, results are confidential.

HPV Vaccination

While chlamydia is the most common *bacterial* STI, the most common STI in the United States is human papillomavirus (HPV). Like other STIs, many people do not know they are infected and can unknowingly spread the virus. HPV can cause cervical and other types of cancer, including (but not limited to) oral, rectal, or penile cancer. Fortunately, there are vaccines for HPV to prevent a potentially cancer-causing infection. Even though the risk of cancer doesn't develop until later in life, we recommend getting these vaccines as a child when they can provide the best protection. Routine HPV vaccination can start as early as 9 but is generally recommended between the ages of 11 and 12. Before the age of 15, children need two doses 6 to 12 months apart to be fully vaccinated; if vaccination starts after the age of 15, 3 doses will be needed to be fully vaccinated. People generally can get vaccinated for HPV up to the age of 26.

If you have questions or concerns about chlamydia screening and prevention, or the HPV vaccine, your provider would be happy to discuss them with you!

Getting The Most From My UNC Chart

By Jean Bolduc, Chair, [FMC Patient Advisory Council](#)

We all appreciate the ability to communicate with our healthcare team via [My UNC Chart](#) (aka “MyChart”). From prescription refills to test results, MyChart can save patients and providers a lot of time.



Here are some tips for getting the maximum benefit from your use of MyChart:

- **Email your care team with non-urgent questions.** MyChart's features will always be changing and upgrading, but for now it is intended only for non-urgent questions. If you have symptoms that need immediate attention (chest pain, shortness of breath, allergic reactions) you should call the urgent care or go to the nearest emergency room.

Also, it's important to remember that although you can informally communicate with your physician via MyChart, your messages should be limited to medical issues that you're experiencing. FMC doctors receive thousands of messages every month and they want to get to all of them on a timely basis. Try to avoid repeating your question in an effort to secure a response. If you need an answer more urgently, please call the office. During business hours, our

phone agents will transfer calls that need immediate assistance to UNC Nurse Connect. If you need to speak to an after-hours nurse, call us at (984) 974-0210 and press “3” to reach UNC Nurse Connect.

- **Requesting prescription renewals** is one of the most common interactions through MyChart. If you haven't been seen in the office for more than 12 months, please make an appointment to see your provider. For many medicines, it's necessary to do blood work to make sure that there's a therapeutic level of the drug in your blood and that your liver and kidneys are tolerating the medicine. Your doctor usually cannot refill prescriptions that are over a year old for this reason, so keep track of your meds and get your annual appointment scheduled – which you can also do via MyChart!
- **View laboratory test results** - Whenever you've had a test, you can see the results quickly on MyChart. Patients often see the results before their doctors do, so if you get an email alert that the results are viewable and you see something “out of range”, wait a few hours until your doctor sees it before asking questions. Your doctor's comment might be to say that one indicator is a little high, but nothing worrisome.
- **View your recent clinic visits** - this is a very helpful thing to do in advance of an annual visit or if you see a test result that's “out of normal range.” If you had that test last year, what was the result then? This can help you prepare a list of questions to go over with your doctor, making the best use of everyone's time.
- **Access virtual care options, including e-visits** - One of the few good things that changed our world as a result of COVID was doing things over the Internet ... Shopping, paying the bills and attending meetings. If getting out of the house is very difficult or you need to talk to your doctor but not necessarily be examined, consider a virtual visit via MyChart. It's secure and saves you the trip to the office. That said, certain conditions require an in-person exam ... like a skin rash or abdominal pain.
- **Share your medical records with friends or family** who are helping with your care. If you're helping a family member with managing their care, you can have them give you access to their records within MyChart. This can keep things clear when it comes to medicines' dosages and doctors' instructions for the plan of care. You can also upload Medical Power of Attorney documents to be stored in your family member's record. This will then be available across the UNC Healthcare system including specialists and hospitals.

How to get the most out of My UNC Chart



USE FOR NON-URGENT SYMPTOMS - for immediate attention call Urgent Care or go to the nearest emergency room.



PRESCRIPTION RENEWALS - if you haven't been seen for more than 12 months, please make an appointment.



VIEWING LAB RESULTS - patients often see results before doctors do, so wait a few hours before asking questions.



VIEW RECENT CLINIC VISITS - this can help you prepare a list of questions to get the best out of your appointment.



ACCESS VIRTUAL CARE & E-VISITS - If you need to talk to your doctor but not necessarily be examined.



SHARE YOUR MEDICAL RECORDS WITH FRIENDS & FAMILY - for who would like assistance with managing their care.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices.

If you or someone you know needs help now, please call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org



988
SUICIDE
& CRISIS
LIFELINE

There is hope

Talk with us. If you or someone you know needs support now, call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org

PEP22-06-03-004

You are not alone

If you have been diagnosed with depression, or think you are experiencing depression symptoms, you don't have to suffer alone. In addition to the 988 lifeline, there are resources to help you manage your mental health and wellness. Depression and other mental health issues are not only treatable, but recovery is possible. Family Medicine has our own Behavioral Health team that can connect you with resources as well.

- **Talk to your primary care provider.**

Your provider is the first stop for your concerns and symptoms, physical or mental. Your primary care provider can assess your needs, help create a treatment plan, and

connect you to mental health resources.

- **Find a nearby therapist or psychiatrist.** Many therapists are offering virtual services amidst the pandemic. If you would like to research therapists in your area, try starting with the website [Psychology Today](https://www.psychologytoday.com). You can read more about therapists based on their specialties, and find a good fit for you.
- **Let your loved ones know.** If you feel safe to do so, communicate with those close to you about your depression and mental health. While being depressed may have you feeling isolated, you are not alone!

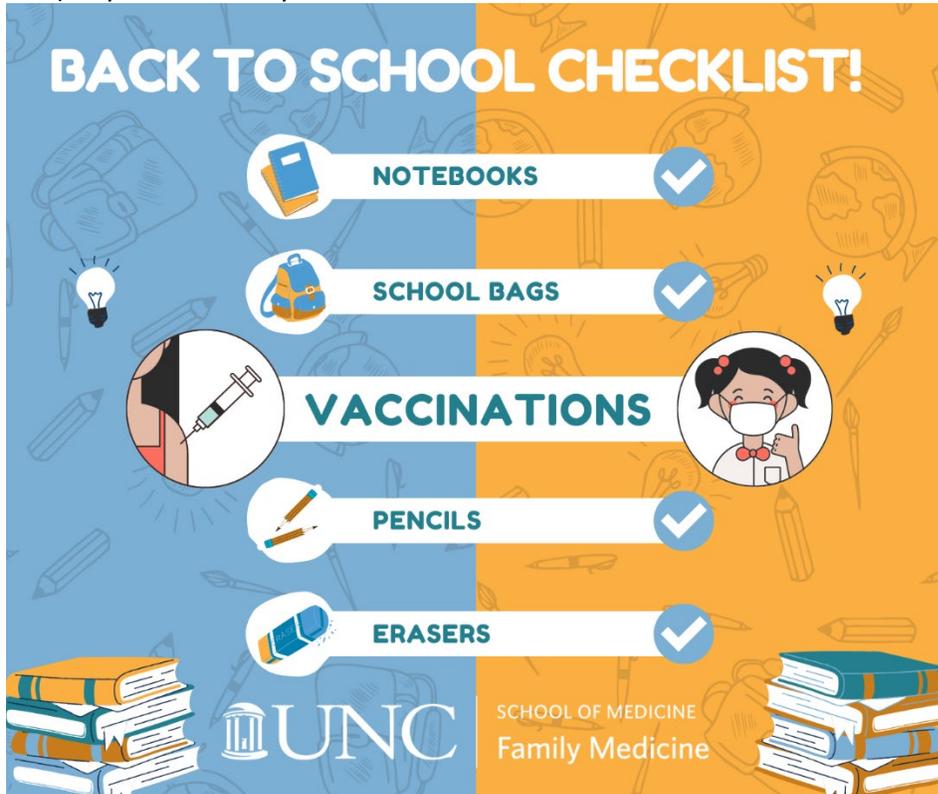
DEPRESSION OR JUST A "ROUGH PATCH?"

People can be diagnosed with depression if, for two weeks or longer, they experience depressed mood or loss of interest plus at least four of the following symptoms:

- Persistent sadness (feeling sad, empty, hopeless)
- Loss of interest in pleasure in things you used to enjoy
- Anger, irritability, unexplainable frustration
- Sleep disturbances, insomnia, or sleeping too much (hypersomnia)
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Reduced appetite & weight loss, or increased cravings & weight gain
- Trouble concentrating, or slowed thinking
- Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- Thoughts of death or suicide

Back to School – Make Sure Your Child is Up-To-Date on Their Vaccinations!

You can check if your child is due for their vaccines on [My UNC Chart](#) (menu-> my record -> preventive care) or you can ask at your child's next visit!



Bothered By Chronic Lower Back Pain?

You may be able to participate in a research study using mindfulness training for patients with chronic low-back pain. The Optimizing Pain Treatment in Medical Settings Using Mindfulness (OPTIMUM) study is looking for patients 18 & up who have had lower back pain for at least 3 months. Participants in the study may be eligible for up to \$365 in compensation. Call (919) 323-1803 or email OptimumUNC@med.unc.edu to learn more!

Bothered by chronic low back pain?



Have you had lower back pain for at least 3 months that limits what you can do? If you are 18 or older, you may be able to take part in a UNC research study on mindfulness training for pain.

Participation may include:

- Completing surveys and brief calls
- Attending weekly group sessions on your phone or computer
- Up to \$365 in compensation

optimum.unc.edu



UNC IRB # 19-2023

Call us to learn more: 919-323-1803

Email: OptimumUNC@med.unc.edu



Elondra



Nandie



Malik



Want to keep up with the amazing work our faculty and staff are accomplishing? Follow [UNC Family Medicine](#) on social media!



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