
Referral for Early Evaluation of Developmental Delay and Autism Spectrum Disorders in Children 18-42 Months of Age

INFORMATION FOR PHYSICIANS

Currently, Indiana children receive a diagnosis of autism at an average age of 5. Growing evidence indicates that autism and developmental delay can be identified much earlier, as early as 18 months, and that earlier intervention leads to optimal outcomes.

What is the Early Evaluation (EE) consultation?

The EE visit is a diagnostic visit for children **18-42 months old** who have concerns that have been identified by developmental and/or autism screening. An extensive work-up in a single, two-hour consultation includes a diagnostic interview and administration of the STAT (Screening Tool for Autism in Toddlers and Young Children). Lisa Bergeron, MD provides Early Evaluation services in Fort Wayne. Dr. Bergeron is a pediatrician with expertise in behavior, development and diagnosis of complex conditions.

Who should be referred for Early Evaluation?

Early Evaluation is appropriate for children 18-42 months of age with concerns identified on screening. If there is a questionable diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder or developmental delay (for example, the child has a family history of autism but seems typically developing, or the child did not pass the MCHAT but otherwise looks fine), we still want to see all children with **any, even the smallest, suspicion of autism or developmental delay**. Also, for all children with a suspicion of autism/developmental delay, refer to First Steps while awaiting formal diagnosis.

What happens after the Early Evaluation visit?

If the patient receives a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and/or developmental delay, the patient will be referred to appropriate intervention and support programs. We will address any immediate concerns related to autism/developmental delay. *A summary will be sent to you detailing what occurred and Dr. Bergeron's recommendations, so that you may appropriately follow up with the patient and family.*

What is expected from the patient's community pediatrician or family physician?

The Early Evaluation team needs the physician to send documentation prior to the consultation, and provide continuing care of the patient and family following Early Evaluation.

Prior to the child's visit, please fax the following information (if available) to 260-266-5409, attn.: Early Evaluation: Results of MCHAT/ASQ (or other standardized test), Results of Hearing/Vision Test, Family History/Social History, Developmental Milestones, Newborn Screen, Growth Charts/OFC.

Please call 260-266-5400 with any questions. Our address is Parkview Children's Clinic, 11115 Parkview Plaza Dr., Fort Wayne, IN 46845. We welcome your collaboration and look forward to working with you to drive down the age of diagnosis for autism spectrum disorder and developmental delays.