

Immunization Clinics

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I arrived at 625 Cherry Street. A municipal garage across the street made parking easy, an important consideration when transporting children and paraphernalia. Large elevators eliminated the hassle of stairs and kept the trip to the four floor health center pleasant. In fact the health center is probably one of the easiest places in Reading to take kids and gear.

I'm not sure what I expected the health center to be like but it was much like the pediatrician's office on a slow day. The office was carpeted and well lighted. Rows of chairs were set aside for parents. Moms and Dads comforted children who had already been immunized. Several other children placed hide and seek between the chairs. Two toddlers emptied the toy box and climbed in. I signed Ethan in and Zach played cars with a new found buddy.

In the 20 minutes before Ethan had his shot, I had a chance to talk to some of the parents waiting for immunizations. "We come mostly because of the cost of getting shots at the doctor's office," explained John Gehr. His daughter Dana, 19 months, was waiting for her MMR, mumps, measles and rubella vaccine. "We like getting our shots here," he added.

Debbie Berg brought her nephew Dylan Piehel to get his Hib (Haemophilus Influenza b) vaccine. "My sister is sick so I brought Dylan. She is happy with the service she gets here. It just got too expensive to do it at the doctor's," she said.

Dylan is not the only child brought by someone other than his parents. "With so many parents working often other family members or friends bring the kids for their immunizations. We simply ask that the parents write a note giving permission for the shot to be given," Sanderson said.

Sanderson also recommended that parents check their children's health before sending them for shots. "If children have a fever or are sick, don't send them for a

shot. If they have a mild cold it may be all right for them to be immunized. Call the office early and discuss it with one of the nurses," Sanderson explained.

Ethan's name was called and we gathered up our gear and headed into the office. Nurse Peg Giering checked on Ethan's health history including any reaction to past immunizations.

Then the time had arrived. Zach was concerned about Ethan's performance under pressure. "These hurt. If you're good you get a treat." Ethan gurgled and pulled his brother's hair.

Giering looked at Zach and said "It doesn't seem right to tell him it won't hurt does it? But it won't last long."

It took a second for Ethan to believe what was happening. Giering was nearly finished before he broke into a scream.

We hurried him back into the waiting room and within a minute he was giggling at the antics of the other kids. Shortly I put him down to crawl around on the floor until the 20 minutes waiting period was over.

"We ask parents to wait 20 minutes in case the child should have any severe reaction. It doesn't happen very often but we would like the child to be here if it does," Sanderson said.

It allowed plenty of time to schedule Ethan for another DPT (diphtheria pertussis tetanus) two months and set Zach up for his pre-school boosters.

Ethan's recovery was aided by attention from his brother and several other little friends. Neither fellow was ready to leave when the 20 minutes were over.

Zach finally agreed to pick up the toys and proceed with getting Ethan's treat. As I was saying good bye to Pat Sanderson I heard Zach tell the baby, "Ethan how about a hamburger for a treat."

Ethan gave his brother a big toothless grin. I guess when you have a brother, treats should be for two.

Our first trip was successful and

Ida's Notebook

Ida Risser



All of a sudden fall is here although I haven't given up hope for a few more warm and sunny days. Somehow I was caught off guard and still had a lot of house plants to pot when the first frost was predicted.

The four black kittens that live on the back porch were no help. In fact they pawed soil out of the flower pots and chewed the plants. They are simply too playful for me. My daughter has promised to take two of them and I'm very glad.

I've just finished spending a lot of time hand chopping tomatoes, celery and peppers for a relish that I cook each year. This is my second batch as I have a son who likes it a lot. It is easier to spend time on something that is appreciated — or so it seems. A while back we had a hired man who lov-

ed my jellies and jams and ate a piece or two of bread every meal. But now that he is no longer here, my jelly shelf stays full and I didn't make very much this year.

a big boost to our wallets since we continue to have high medical bills while treating Ethan's allergies.

He is much healthier and happier now although he is underweight. At six months he weighed 15 pounds. We, like many other parents, are grateful for the immunization programs that offer our children a boost in health and a boost to our wallets since it saves us money.

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Years ago I washed the milker every morning. I hated to leave the small children and baby in the house while I did this work but it was a necessary job. What made the job harder was that all I heard was that the hoses weren't clean enough and the straps that held the milkers should be scrubbed more.

A kind word goes a long way and a compliment makes a day much more pleasant. I remember my husband telling me that my cherry pies were the "best." I suspect it was the few drops of almond flavor that I added that did the trick. Of course, he has never complained about the shoofly pies, the apple and raisin or the lemon meringues. It is a good thing that I enjoy cooking and baking.

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