



Northeast Georgia
PHYSICIANS GROUP

Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine

April 2023

Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing Northeast Georgia Physicians Group Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine to participate in your child's sports physical for the upcoming year. We strive to make your overall experience with us a positive one. We have attached our organizational guidelines for performing sports physicals in a public location. Please read these guidelines prior to the date of your child's scheduled physical and feel free to contact us if you have any questions whatsoever. Our number one priority is the safety of the children, and a brief overview of these guidelines will ensure a positive and efficient overall experience for everyone.

We truly value you as a patient and appreciate the trust and confidence you have placed in our practice. We look forward to serving you!

Sincerely,

Darrell Scales, M.D.
Medical Director
Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine
Northeast Georgia Physicians Group



Northeast Georgia PHYSICIANS GROUP

Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine

What are sports physicals?

The physicians and staff of NGPG Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine are proud to offer sports physicals to our surrounding schools. It is a relatively brief meeting in which your child's medical history will be reviewed and a basic physical examination will be performed to make sure your athlete is ready to participate in the sport(s) of his or her choice.

Why does my child have to have a sports physical?

Sports physicals are now a regular part of participation in school athletics. By completing a thorough medical history and physical examination, we are trying to identify any health problems that could represent a potential risk for certain sports, such as a heart condition or a breathing problem.

Who should come?

Any interested school athlete without any outstanding or serious medical problems.

What should my athlete bring?

The standardized Pre-participation Physical Evaluation form with the "History Form" completely filled out by a **parent**. Every medication the child takes should be included by name. Every medical history question answered with a "YES" needs to be explained in writing by a parent. A parental signature and date is required in all places where it is requested (at the bottom of pages 1 and 2).

** Failing to provide written responses to history questions answered "YES" or a parental signature on pages 1 and 2 will result in your child being denied a sports physical. This is for the safety of your child. **

When should I consider waiting to send my child to their primary doctor for their sports physical?

1. Any child with a complex medical problem including, but not limited to:
 - a heart condition (murmur or irregular heart beat)
 - a previous heart surgery
 - seizure disorder
 - diabetes
 - severe breathing problems such as poorly controlled asthma
 - fainting episodes
 - high blood pressure
 - 3 or more concussions
2. If your child has any problems related to their heart or lungs that have not yet been evaluated by their primary doctor but you checked "YES" on the health history form to items related to:
 - chest pain with exercise

- passing out or nearly passing out with exercise
- trouble breathing with exercise or feeling more short of breath than usual with exercise
- dizziness with exercise

In the group physical setting on the campus of a school, we are not equipped to thoroughly evaluate athletes with these kinds of conditions. It is best for them to have their sports physical performed by their primary care doctor/pediatrician or medical specialist. Again, this is for their safety.

What are some reasons my child might not be cleared?

As discussed above, if there are any serious medical problems or unresolved medical issues, it is best for them to be examined and cleared by their family doctor. When we perform sports physicals in a group setting, we are not able to access old medical records or order any new medical tests that might be necessary.

Additionally, sometimes athletes are found to have a new heart murmur or breathing problem during their sports physical. In this case, they will likely not be cleared in the group setting. We will let you know what we recommend at that point, whether a visit with your primary doctor or a specialist may be required.

What if my child has a medical condition that has already been cleared by a specialist?

For example, if your child has or had a heart murmur, and had an EKG or other heart test performed by your primary doctor or a heart doctor, and that doctor stated your child was cleared to participate in sports, please bring written and signed documentation of that from the doctor's office (even if it was several years ago). If that information is not readily available, the athlete will not be cleared in the group setting. If that documentation is not available, the athlete should be taken to the primary doctor or specialist for the sports physical and clearance to participate. Again, we must see documentation in order to safely clear your child.

Thank you for allowing us to participate in the health care of your athletes! We hope this answers any questions you may have. Please direct any further questions to your Athletic Director or Athletic Trainer. Our number one priority is the safety of your young athletes and we take this responsibility seriously. We will work with you in every way possible to get your athlete safely out on the field/track/court!