

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEDICAL SERVICES?

### Child Advocacy Centers

- **A board-certified Child Abuse Pediatrician or Nurse Practitioner performs the sexual abuse medical evaluation and can make medical diagnoses**
- Environment is child friendly and trauma-informed
- Forensic interviewing and advocacy available
- Follow up services like STI and pregnancy testing
- Appointment required

### Emergency Department

- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) or Forensic Nurse Examiner (FNE) performs the medical exam
- In many cases there is availability 24/7, no appointment required
- Setting is more appropriate for cases requiring immediate medical evaluation or when your Child Advocacy Center is not available

## FIND A CENTER

For a list of local Child Advocacy Centers across Wisconsin, please visit [cacsofwi.org](http://cacsofwi.org)

## CHILD ABUSE MEDICAL EXAM DECISION MAKING GUIDE

*Important considerations for various situations and community resources you need to make the best decision*



*\*If at any time you have questions about whether a medical exam is appropriate or what type of exam should be pursued, please call your local CAC.*



## SEXUAL ABUSE

Every child who is a suspected victim of sexual abuse should be offered an expert medical evaluation preferably at a Child Advocacy Center, including children who do not disclose penetration.

### IMMEDIATE SAME-DAY EXAM

Does the child need an immediate exam?

Choose this option if **ANY** of the following are true:

- **Sexual abuse occurred within 72 hours** in prepubertal children and within 120 hours of adolescents
- Child has significant **pain or bleeding**
- **Safety considerations** require urgent medical evaluation
- **Child has another acute medical condition or injury** requiring treatment in an emergency department setting

### NON-URGENT EXAM

Can the child be seen at a later date?

Choose this option if **ALL** of the following are true:

- **Sexual abuse has occurred outside the window of evidence collection** (within 72-120 hours)
- The child is **not experiencing pain or bleeding**
- **The child can be kept safe** until the exam can occur

In general, children seen for acute sexual abuse exams at a child advocacy center or in an emergency department **should be seen at a Child Advocacy Center approximately 2 weeks later** for a colposcopic exam, sexually transmitted infection (STI) treatment, and/or pregnancy testing.

## PHYSICAL ABUSE

Every child who is a suspected victim of physical abuse should be offered an expert medical evaluation. This includes children who have been exposed to domestic violence, witnessed physical abuse, or other children who reside in the home where physical abuse is suspected to have occurred.

### PHYSICAL ABUSE CONSIDERATIONS

- 1 Children who are physically abused should have a medical evaluation, ideally **as soon as possible** after the injury occurs, when the injury is the most visible.
- 2 If the injury is **not life-threatening** and does not require repair or further testing, the child can usually be seen at a CAC.
- 3 If a CAC appointment is not available in a timely manner, **photos of the injury can be taken**, ideally by law enforcement or in an emergency department setting, and the CAC medical provider can view the photos when the child is seen for a CAC medical evaluation at a later date.
- 4 Most cases with suspected **head trauma, abdominal trauma, or fractures** will need to be seen in the emergency department where lab tests and imaging can be performed.



## DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN (DEC)

### INDICATIONS FOR A DEC MEDICAL EVALUATION

- Child was removed from a drug environment prior to being placed in a new environment of care
- Child is 10 years old or younger

### DEC PROCESS

If you have determined that a drug endangered child medical evaluation is needed, follow these next steps.

- **Bring child to a Child Advocacy Center** to collect a urine specimen for urine drug investigation (UDI) panel during your CAC's hours of operation.
- **Child must be toilet trained** if the evaluation is occurring when medical staff are not present at the CAC.
- **Schedule a follow-up medical exam** at the CAC if no medical evaluation was available the same day.
- **After hours**, the child should be brought to your county's designated emergency department that is able to order a urine drug investigation panel.

- Make sure the emergency department provider orders **urine drug investigation panel**, not a rapid drug screen.