

# The Importance of a 3-Day Medical Exam



Children entering the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) care must see a doctor within 3 business days to be checked for injuries or illnesses and obtain any treatments they need. The purpose of the 3-Day Medical Exam is to identify, treat and provide caregivers with education regarding a child's acute or chronic medical and/or behavioral health conditions. The 3-day exam is only required for children entering foster care. While children moving placements may need to establish a new medical home, they do not need a new 3-day exam when they move placements within foster care.

These exams are extremely important for the foster care patients you may serve. See below for what other Superior providers have had to say:



*“A foster parent brought the child in for their 3-day Medical Exam, and they were having a frank asthma exacerbation that the father and CPS caseworker were unaware of and did not recognize. The child could have gotten much sicker if not seen that day.” – Superior Provider*

*“Because of the rapport developed at the 3-day Medical Exam and the 30-day Texas Health Steps exam, the Superior member was comfortable enough to disclose some of their previous trauma that had not been known to any of the adults in her life.” – Superior Provider*

*“While in the office for their 3-day Medical Exam, I noticed a handprint on the child's back. The child was old enough to change their clothes themselves. If they had not been seen for the 3-day Medical Exam, this would have gone unnoticed by caregivers.” – Superior Provider*

Superior encourages all providers to schedule the 3-Day Medical Exam in a timely manner whenever possible. The 3-Day Medical Exam is distinct from a Texas Health Steps (THS) exam. A new caregiver will likely not yet know enough about the child to provide the behavioral and developmental history crucial for a THS exam during the 3-Day Medical Exam. The plan developed during the 3-day exam should include scheduling of a THS exam within the required 30-day timeframe.

Remember, after seeing a patient for their 3-Day Medical Exam, please ensure the correct billing requirements are being used:

- ✓ Claims should be submitted with the most appropriate Evaluation and Management (E/M) procedure code with the addition of a U2 modifier in the last position.
- ✓ New client codes: 99201 – 99205
- ✓ Established client codes: 99211 – 99215

Please note:

- Texas law prohibits vaccinations, except for emergency tetanus vaccination, from being administered during a 3-day exam.
- Exams completed outside of the 3-day timeframe do not satisfy the requirement.
- Exams completed within the 3-day timeframe, but not billed correctly do not satisfy the requirement.



Additional 3-day exam resources including exam components and billing guidance can be found at [FosterCareTX.com](https://www.fostercaretx.com), or by calling Superior Provider Services at **1-877-391-5921**.