

The Vicksburg Post.

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TUESDAY FEBRUARY 13, 2007 Last modified: Tuesday, February 13, 2007 11:52 AM CST

Walk-in medical checkups now offered in Wal-Mart

By [Danny Barrett Jr.](#)

[02/13/07]A national provider of non-emergency health care has set up in Vicksburg, enabling customers to get a checkup as they check off their shopping lists.

CheckUps, a New York-based firm, opened for business at the Iowa Boulevard Wal-Mart last week.

A grand opening event will be Wednesday when 13 other walk-in facilities open in Wal-Mart stores in Louisiana and Alabama.

In a promotion dubbed "Good For Your Heart," the company will offer an array of services without the standard fees for a week beginning Valentine's Day at 9 a.m., including cholesterol and blood pressure screenings.

"Our mission is to deliver high quality, affordable non-urgent medical care," said company CEO Jack Tawil. "CheckUps is the new model for basic health-care delivery in America."

The firm operated as Quick Quality Care at eight clinics inside Wal-Mart stores in Florida and Mississippi since May 2005.

Once fully open for patients, the clinic will offer routine care for ailments like earaches and urinary tract infections for \$65 and up, with basic checkups for men and women at \$67, among other conditions not life-threatening.

The concept of clinics in large retail stores is not new, as the trend has grown parallel with a nationwide strain on hospital emergency room patient loads.

Retailers such as Target, CVS/pharmacy, Albertsons, Inc. and electronics chain Best Buy have partnered with operators of small providers within the past five years.

In Mississippi, Quick Quality Care had clinics leasing space at Wal-Mart locations in Jackson, Madison, Pearl, Forest and Brookhaven. Now, as CheckUps, Tawil said, the company expands into Vicksburg next door to the store's Vision Center, the first such arrangement with a department of Wal-Mart.

"We have no other connection to Wal-Mart," Tawil said, adding the staff of about three nurse practitioners or licensed practical nurses plus a medical assistant will be local.

For more expensive services geared toward preventive care, including weight management and vascular health, charges will run up to \$200, depending on the scope of the condition.

However, said medical assistant and staff member Lakeisha Ross, the clinic plans to accept insurance plans such as Blue Cross-Blue Shield and UnitedHealthcare within the next month.

In accordance with licensure laws in Mississippi, each nurse practitioner will maintain a supervisory relationship with a physician. State law stipulates the supervising physician be located 15 miles from the clinic door.

Practitioners will not have authority to write prescriptions. In Mississippi, practitioners are allowed to write prescriptions in some cases, but not in others.

The Vicksburg location will be open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday.

Louisiana locations to open as part of the promotion are in Hammond, Covington, Laplace, Houma and Thibodaux. Those to open in Alabama include Mobile, Bay Minette, Trussville, Hartselle, Gardendale, Athens and two in Huntsville.

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