

Walk-in clinics opening in 8 Wal-Marts in Alabama

Athens, Hartselle stores offering non-emergency medical help to residents, no appointments necessary

BIRMINGHAM (AP) — Non-emergency medical help will be available at walk-in clinics opening Wednesday inside Wal-Mart stores in Athens and Hartselle.

The CheckUps clinics, staffed by nurse practitioners, also are scheduled to open at 9 a.m. in two Wal-Marts in Huntsville and one each in Trussville, Gardendale, Bay Minette and Mobile.

The nurse practitioners, who work with local physicians, diagnose common ailments, provide routine pediatric care, blood screenings and immunizations, and can write prescriptions, according to a company news release.

The company says visits usually take less than 15 minutes, and no appointments are necessary.

A routine visit for a medical problem like a cold or flu costs \$65, while routine child and adolescent health care ranges from \$30 to \$50, according to the CheckUps Web site, which lists charges for its various medical services.

"CheckUps offers consumers a new, lower-cost option for non-emergency health care," CheckUps Chairman Jack Tawil said in a statement.

The new clinics are opening with a Valentine's Day promotion that offers free screenings, including cholesterol and blood pressure, body-fat analysis, peak flow lung capacity readings and glucose analysis.

The company said the free screenings will be offered from Wednesday through Feb. 21.

The company, which already operates eight clinics in Wal-Mart stores in Florida and Mississippi, is also opening six clinics in Mississippi and Louisiana on Wednesday.

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