

7 & 8 year Check-up

Nutrition and Physical Activity

- Serve your child breakfast, or make sure that school provides one. Research shows that eating breakfast helps children learn and behave better at school, and reduces your child's chance of becoming obese.
- Share family meals together as often as possible. Make mealtimes pleasant and companionable; encourage conversation and turn off the TV during mealtimes.
- Help your child learn to choose appropriate foods, including plenty of fruits and vegetables every day. Aim for at least 5 servings of fruits or vegetables every day.
- Try not to use candy or sweets as a reward.
- Make sure your child is getting enough calcium daily. Children ages 4 to 8 need about 2 cups of low-fat milk each day. Low-fat yogurt and cheese are good alternatives to milk.
- Limit juice to 4 to 6 oz per day of 100% fruit juice.
- If your child has a balance diet, there is no need to add vitamins or iron.
- Encourage your child to be physically active for at least 60 minutes total every day. It doesn't have to happen all at once, but can be split up into several periods of activity over the course of the day.
- Find physical activities your family can enjoy and incorporate into their daily lives.
- Limit the amount of time your child watches TV and plays video games or is on the computer (other than for homework) to **no more than 2 hours** altogether each day.
- Remove any TVs and computers from your child's bedroom.
- To minimize your child's exposure to violence and other age-inappropriate material, be aware of the content included in music, video games, and TV programs that your child watches.

School

- If your child is not doing well in school, ask the teacher about evaluation for special help or tutoring that may be available.
- If your child is anxious about going to school, talk with her about the possibility that she is being bullied by another child. Try to obtain a complete picture of what is happening, and when and where. Contact your child's teacher and the principal to seek their assistance in dealing with the bully.

Development & Mental Health

- Encourage competence, independence, and self-responsibility in all areas by not doing things for your child, but by helping him do things well himself, and by supporting him in helping others through volunteering.
- Show affection and pride in your child's special strengths and use praise liberally.
- Be a positive role model for your child in terms of activities, values, attitudes, and morality.
- Do not hit, shake, or spank your child or permit others to do so. Instead, talk with your child about establishing reasonable consequences for breaking the rules, and follow through with the agreed-upon consequences each time a rule is broken.
- Answer questions simply and honestly at a level appropriate to your child's understanding. If your child receives family life education at school or in the community, discuss the information with him.

Hygiene

- Your child should be having regularly scheduled visits to the dentist.
- Be sure that your child brushes his teeth twice a day with a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste and flosses once a day with your help. Be sure to supervise brushing and flossing. Help him if necessary.

Safety

- Teach your child that the safety rules at home apply at other homes as well.
- Be sure that your child is supervised in a safe environment before and after school and at times when school is out.
- Anticipate providing less direct supervision as your child demonstrates more maturity.
- Be sure your child understands safety rules for the home, including emergency phone numbers, and that she knows what to do in case of a fire or other emergency. Teach your child how to dial 911.
- Help your child to understand it is always OK to ask to come home or call you if she is not comfortable at someone else's house.
- Teach your child that it is never all right for an adult to tell a child to keep secrets from parents, to express interest in private parts, or to ask a child for help with his or her private parts.
- Continue to use a belt-positioning booster seat with the lap and shoulder safety belt until the lap/shoulder belt fits, which means the lap belt can be worn low and flat on the upper thighs, the shoulder belt can be worn across the shoulder rather than the face or neck, and your child can bend at the knees while sitting against the vehicle seat back. This usually happens when your child is between the ages of 8 and 12 and at about 4'9" tall.
- The back seat is the safest place for children younger than 13 to ride.
- Make sure your child always wears a helmet while riding a bike. Now is the time to teach your child "Rules of the Road." Be sure she knows the rules and can use them.
- Watch your child ride. See if she is in control of the bike. See if your child uses good judgment.
- Your child is not old enough to ride at dusk or after dark. Make sure your child brings the bike in when the sun starts to set.
- Make sure your child also always wears protective equipment when skating, skiing, in-line skating, snowboarding, horseback riding, skateboarding, or riding a scooter.
- Teach your child to swim. Knowing how to swim does not make children "drown proof," so even if your child knows how to swim, never let her swim alone.
- Do not let your child play around any water (lake, stream, pool, or ocean) unless an adult is watching. NEVER let your child swim in any fast-moving water.
- Teach your child to never dive into water unless an adult has checked the depth of the water.
- When on any boat, be sure your child is wearing an appropriately fitting life jacket.
- Be sure that swimming pools in your community, apartment complex, or home have a 4-sided fence with a self-closing, self-latching gate.
- Exposure to secondhand smoke greatly increases the risk of heart and lung diseases in your child. For your health and your child's health, please stop smoking if you are a smoker, and insist that others not smoke around your child.
- Young children simply do not understand how dangerous guns can be, despite your warnings. The best way to keep your child safe from injury or death from guns is to never have a gun in the home. If it is necessary to keep a gun in your home, it should be stored unloaded and locked, with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.
- Your family computer should be in a place where you can easily observe your child's use.
- Check the Internet history regularly to be sure you approve of your child's internet choices.
- Just as you monitor your child's activity in the neighborhood and community, it is important to be aware of her internet use. A safety filter allows some parental supervision

Health Maintenance

- Immunizations- See immunization handout.
- Your child's next check up is in 1 year.