



## 9 & 10 year Check-up- For your child

### Nutrition and Physical Activity

- The key to good health is a balance between calorie intake from foods and calorie output in activity.
- Healthy eating prevents weight problems and helps learning.
- Eating a healthy breakfast every day is especially important.
- Every day, try to eat fruits, vegetables, whole-grain breads and cereals, low fat or fat-free dairy products, and lean meats. Drink low-fat or fat-free milk or water instead of soda and sugared drinks. Choose small portions instead of large ones, or share a large portion (especially foods that are high in fat or sugar) with someone else.
- Weight loss is almost never a good idea while your body is rapidly growing in puberty. If you are considering going on a diet to lose weight, talk about it with your doctor first.
- If you are considering taking dietary supplements, please discuss these plans with your doctor to make sure they are safe and really will help you reach your goals.
- Try to get at least 1 hour of moderate- to high-intensity exercise every day.
- Find ways to become more active, such as walking or biking instead of riding in a car, and taking the stairs, not elevators. Be active with your friends to increase the fun. Being physically active every day helps you feel good and focus on your schoolwork.
- It helps to plan times each day that are dedicated to a physical activity you enjoy, making activity part of your routine, rather than an exception.

### School

- Doing well in school is important to how you feel about yourself. However, doing well means something different for each person. What matters is that you try your best and ask for help when you need it.
- Joining clubs and teams, church groups, and friends for activities is a fun way to stay healthy and enjoy being with other kids outside of school.
- If someone picks on you or tries to hurt you, tell them in a firm voice to stop bothering you, and walk away. Tell your teacher, your parents, or another adult you trust about what is happening. Have them help you avoid these situations and stop their harmful behavior.

### Mental Development

- Talking with a safe and trusted adult is an important way to handle anger, disappointment, and worry.
- Good friends are important. They never ask you to do harmful or scary things; they want what is best for you. If you find that a good friend has become a bad friend, try talking with him. If that person is unwilling to change, stop spending time with him.
- Everyone gets angry. It's normal. Here are some ways you can deal with anger. You can avoid getting defensive, calm yourself, acknowledge the importance of the other person's point of view, listen without interrupting, repeat your understanding of what the issues are, and demonstrate your desire to understand the angered person.
- It's normal to have up moods and down moods, but, if you feel sad most of the time, enjoy very few things, or find yourself wishing you were dead, you should talk about it with your doctor. Almost everyone worries at times about how they look and whether they are developing normally.
- Every person has to decide whether or not to try alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, and sex. Chances are, you know at least some of the dangers of trying each of these, but there are many more dangers you likely don't know or don't want to think about. It's not enough to just say, "No." If you really mean "No!" to any one of these choices, you need to clearly say why you feel that way.

### Physical Development & Puberty

- Around age 8 or 9, you will notice your body starting to change. Some of the first things that happen are that you develop body odor, and the skin on your face becomes oilier and may break out in pimples or acne. You will need to bathe every day, use deodorant, and wash your face well in the morning and at night.
- It is never OK for an older child or an adult to show you his or her private parts, to ask you to show your privates, to touch you there, to scare you, or to ask you not to tell your parents about what he or she did with you. Always get away from the person as quickly as possible and tell your parent or another adult right away.

#### For girls:

- The next changes you will notice are that your breasts will start to get bigger. It's normal for one side to be bigger than the other at first. As your breasts grow, you will need to wear a bra.
- Hair will grow on your underarms and pubic area, becoming thicker, darker, and curlier over time. You also will start to grow taller at a very fast rate. This is called the growth spurt. Now is a good time to have pads available to use in your underwear when your periods start.
- Girls can have their first period, or menses, as early as 10, but usually by 13. Every girl is different. Periods often come at unpredictable times at first, but they eventually will come about once every 4 weeks. A small amount of blood, sometimes more brown in color than red, will come from your vagina and appear on your underwear. Use the pads to catch the blood. Change your pad every few hours and wrap the used pad in toilet paper or place it in a small paper bag to be discarded. Most pads cannot be flushed down toilets. Always wash your hands after changing your pad.

#### For boys:

- The next change you will notice is that your testicles will begin to grow larger. Hair will grow on your underarms and pubic area, becoming thicker, darker, and curlier over time. Soon, your penis will become longer and wider and your testicles will continue to grow. You also will start to grow taller at a very fast rate. This is called the growth spurt. Your voice will also start to crack and deepen as your larynx or voice box grows longer. You may find a wet, sticky discharge, called an ejaculation, on your pajama bottoms in the morning. This is called a wet dream. Ejaculations are not the same as passing urine. Ejaculations contain sperm and a special fluid. This happens because of strong surges of hormones that occur while you sleep.

### Hygiene

- To protect your teeth, it is important to brush your teeth at least twice each day and to floss at least once a day.
- If you are playing sports, always wear your mouth guard to protect your teeth.

### Safety

- Being active is good for you, but being safe while being active is just as important. One of the best ways to protect yourself is to wear the right safety equipment, especially a helmet when you are biking, skating, skiing, in-line skating, snowboarding, or horseback riding.
- Swimming lessons are an important way to become comfortable in the water. Ask your parents about learning to swim.
- Never swim without an adult around.
- The back seat of the car is still the safest place for you to sit until you are at least 13.
- Using a booster seat or wearing a safety belt every time you get in the car is the best way to protect yourself from injury and death in a crash.
- Be sure you play safe wherever you play. Every family should have the same safety rules.
- It's always OK to ask a grown-up for help if you are scared or worried. And it's OK to ask to go home and be with your Mom or Dad.
- Adults are supposed to keep their guns away from children. If you see a gun that is unlocked, don't touch it, but tell your parent right away.
- If you are starting to hunt with adults in your family, learn how to use guns and hunting knives safely, and use them only under adult supervision.

### Health Maintenance

- Your next check up is in 1 year.