

## **7 & 8 year Check-up**

### **Nutrition**

- Breakfast is an important meal. Research shows that eating breakfast helps children learn and behave better at school.
- 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.
- 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.
- Your child should get a majority of daily fluids from water and low fat milk. Juice is not necessary. If you give juice, limit to 4 ounces per day of 100% fruit juice.
- Try not to use candy or sweets as a reward.

### **Physical Activity**

- Encourage your child to be physically active for at least 60 minutes total every day. The time 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 your daily lives. Take walks, go on hikes, ride bikes, and play sports together.
- Let your child choose a sport or activity of interest to stay active.
- Limit the amount of “screen time” your child has, including TV, video, computer (except for homework use), tablet, smart phone, and video games to no more than 2 hours altogether each day. Your child should spend more time engaging in activities that keep the mind and body active.
- Do not have TV’s or 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.

### **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. Be sure to supervise brushing and flossing until confident that your child does a complete job every time.

### **School**

- Encourage your child to always try his/her best and to ask for help when needed. Try to focus on the effort that your child puts into school and not the final grade or score.
- 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’s school has concerns about inattention, hyperactivity, or negative behaviors, talk to your child’s teacher and schedule an appointment with us. We may be able to identify the source of the problem and help with the solution.
- If your child is anxious about going to school, talk about the possibility that your child 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 your child learn to do things autonomously. Support your child in then 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.

## **Safety**

- **Car Safety:** In the car, make sure everyone wears a safety belt. At this age, your child should be in a belt-positioning booster seat in the back seat of the vehicle. Your child should use booster seat until the lap belt can be worn low and flat on her upper thighs and the shoulder belt can be worn across her shoulder rather than the face or neck (usually between 8 and 12 years old and at about 4'9" tall).
- **Supervision Outside the Home:** 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. 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.
- **Home Safety:** Be sure your child understands safety rules for the home, including emergency phone numbers, and what to do in case of a fire or other emergency. Teach your child how to dial 911.
- **Helmets/Protective Gear:** Be sure your child always wears appropriate safety equipment when biking, skating, skiing, in-line skating, snowboarding, or horseback riding. Make sure your child wears a properly fitted, approved helmet every time he/she rides a bike. Now is the time to teach your child "Rules of the Road." Be sure your child knows the rules and can use them. 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.
- **Water Safety:** 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 allow to 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, US Coast Guard-approved lifejacket.
- **Sun Protection:** Continue to put sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher) on your child before she goes outside to play or swim.
- **Safety with Adults:** 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.
- **Tobacco-Free Environment:** 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.
- **Guns:** 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.
- **Internet Safety:** 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: Vaccinating your child is one of the most important things you can do to keep your child healthy.
  - Vaccines recommended at the 7 and 8 year old visit: Flu (if in season)
- Your next visit will be in 1 year. We look forward to seeing you then! Annual check-ups are recommended to maintain your child’s health and help guide your children through the milestones of life.
- Reasons to call us:
  - Fever alone is not an emergency. Call us right away if your child has a fever (temperature 100.4 and above) plus any of the concerning symptoms below. If your child has a fever, but is otherwise well, you can manage at home with comfort measures until able to be seen in the office. For Tylenol and Motrin dosing see our website at [www.vapg.com](http://www.vapg.com). Please make an office visit for any fever that lasts longer than 4 days.
  - If your child is showing signs of dehydration and making urine less than every 6 hours.
  - If your child appears to have difficulty breathing shown by fast breathing, retractions (sucking in of the skin above the collarbone, between ribs, and below ribs), or flaring of nostrils with each breath.
  - If your child is lethargic, difficult to arouse, and not responsive to auditory or tactile stimuli.
  - If you have any questions or concerns about your child. We are always here to help.
- Care Plan:

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For more information see our website at [www.vapg.com](http://www.vapg.com) and the Healthy Children website from the American Academy of Pediatrics [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)