

Keeping Kids Healthy and Safe



What's inside:

- Tips to help you and your child prepare for doctor's checkups
- Ways to keep your child's teeth healthy and strong
- Things to remember before, during, and after a sick visit at the doctor
- Safety tips for indoors and outdoors
- Ideas for keeping yourself healthy and energized

growing Every Day Every Way

A creation of

sesameworkshop.

The nonprofit educational organization behind Sesame Street and so much more

Sesame Workshop is the nonprofit educational organization that revolutionized children's television programming with the landmark *Sesame Street*. The Workshop produces local *Sesame Street* programs, seen in over 140 countries, and other acclaimed shows to help bridge the literacy gap, including *The Electric Company*. Beyond television, the Workshop produces content for multiple media platforms on a wide range of issues including literacy, health, and military deployment. Initiatives meet specific needs to help young children and families develop critical skills, acquire healthy habits, and build emotional strength to prepare them for lifelong learning. Learn more at sesameworkshop.org.

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UnitedHealthcare supports a wide range of programs and services that help families and individuals build a strong foundation for lifelong healthy habits. UnitedHealthcare is part of UnitedHealth Group, a diversified health and well-being company, which serves children, families and individuals across the country.



Your Child's Healthy Team

Your child is growing every day—and there are many ways to continue keeping him healthy so he can play, learn, and grow!

Well Visits

Visits with the primary care provider and dentist are special times to build a relationship with your child's healthy team and ask questions.

Preparing Yourself for the Checkup

- You might write down questions about your child's health beforehand. It's a great way to start a conversation that will keep you involved in your child's care. You might ask about:
 - Your child's height, weight, vision, movement, and overall health
 - A medical interpreter to help you understand and talk about your child's health during the appointment if you are not fluent in English
 - Milestones your child should be meeting

Preparing Your Child

- Kids may be scared of the visit. Explain that doctors and nurses keep us healthy.
- Let your child know what will happen ("The doctor will check different parts of your body to make sure they're healthy. I will stay with you the whole time.")
- Before the visit, invite your child to pretend he is the doctor! Let him feel and listen to your heartbeat, or ask him to look into your mouth while you say, "Ahhhhh!"

CHILDREN SHOULD SEE A DOCTOR FOR WELL VISITS (CHECKUPS):

- in the hospital at birth
- seven times in their first year, then at
 - 15 months — 30 months
 - 18 months — once a year after turning three
 - 24 months

Your child's whole body needs to be healthy—that includes his teeth!

Infants and toddlers

- Use a washcloth to clean your baby's gums and teeth daily.
- Schedule his first dentist visit between 6 and 12 months.
- Talk to your dentist about preventing cavities with fluoride varnish when your child is teething.

Preschoolers

- Help your child brush his teeth at least twice daily (after breakfast and before bed).
- Visit the dentist every six months.

School-age

- Your child may be able to brush on his own, but will still need some help.
- Ask your dentist's advice about caring for permanent teeth.

Immunizations (shots) help protect kids from serious and life-threatening illnesses.

Many immunizations are given over the first four years of life, but others are given throughout childhood and adolescence.

Talk to your doctor about questions you have about immunizations.

For recommended immunization schedules, visit:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/

The American Academy of Pediatrics
healthychildren.org/english/safety-prevention/immunizations/pages/default.aspx



When Little Ones Are Sick

When your child isn't feeling well, reaching out to a doctor or nurse can get you the expert advice you need.



Before the Appointment

- Call the primary care provider's office and explain what's happening, along with any worries or concerns. Tell the doctor or nurse about your child's medical history. On this call, ask if you should go to the emergency room or to an urgent care center.
- Make a list of questions or concerns to bring up at the visit.
- Bring your insurance card, a list of any medicines your child takes, and your pharmacy's contact information.
- Explain where you're going and why. Let your child know that the doctor and nurse can help figure out what is making her feel sick and find a way to help her feel better.
- Bring a comfort item, such as a favorite stuffed animal.

During the Appointment

- If the doctor prescribes medicine, make sure you understand how and when to give it to your child.
- Ask the doctor or nurse what you should expect and why you might need to follow up with a call or visit to the doctor.

After the Appointment

- Pick up any prescribed medication, and ask the pharmacist any questions.
- Talk with your child about how you will take care of her, and how the medicine may help her feel better.
- If someone other than you will be taking care of your child, share important information about medicines the child will have to take or symptoms to look for.

Know that your extra hugs and snuggles can help your child feel comforted—and heal!



Safety Counts!

You already know that your little one is moving more (and faster!) each day. As he begins to explore the world around him, there are many ways to keep him safe.



Indoors

- Place furniture, televisions, and wall hangings against steady, hard surfaces, so that they don't fall over.
- Keep battery-operated electronics out of your child's reach. Batteries can be toxic and harmful if swallowed.
- Make sure that toys don't have small parts that can cause choking.
- Be sure that all toys, makeup, and paint used in your home are lead-free. Lead is a metal that can cause poisoning if it gets into the body, and damage the brain, bones, and muscles.
- Install window bars or window guards on upper-level windows.
- If your child is under five, avoid foods that are small, round, or hard, and may cause choking, such as nuts, grapes, and popcorn.
- Keep vitamins, medicines, detergents, and cleaning supplies high up out of your child's reach, and behind a childproof lock. Keep the Poison Control number posted.

Outdoors

- Buckle your child into his car seat each time you travel by car. Check its label to make sure it's right for your child's age, weight, and height.
- Even a few inches of water can be dangerous. Make sure you're watching kids closely near bathtubs, pools, fountains, or containers of water.
- Little ones may not know when to take a break, so be mindful of how long they're in the sun. Reapply sunscreen often and make sure they drink lots of water!
- Especially before meals, help your child wash his hands with soap and water to remove germs, or use hand sanitizer.



You Matter



Taking Care of Yourself

You have one of the most important jobs in the world. You already do so much each and every day to care for your little one. You bathe her, feed her, play with her, comfort her, and so much more. It's exhausting—so take good care of yourself, physically and emotionally, so you can be at your best!

Even in one short moment, you can:

- close your eyes and take a few deep breaths
- ask someone you love for a hug
- look at a photo that makes you happy
- listen to your favorite music

Keeping yourself healthy will help give you the energy you need to care for your family:

- start your day with a healthy breakfast and eat well throughout the day
- get as much sleep as you can manage
- exercise (even if it's only a short walk outside or dancing in your living room with your child)
- spend time with supportive friends and family
- be honest with your doctor about how you're doing

Parenting can be one of the most joyful experiences in life. It can also be one of the most challenging. You are not alone. Building a strong support network (a team!) of family, friends, mentors, and health professionals can help you handle the ups and downs of parenting.

