

Six-Nine Year Visit

Visits to the pediatrician should stimulate home discussion about a variety of health matters. Here are some topics for you and your children to talk about after today's check-up. Wherever possible let your child have the opportunity to think through the details of how to apply these general guidelines. Try to explain reasons for rules instead of just "laying down the law".

1. Eat a well-balanced diet. Try to eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. Avoid excessive junk foods which are high in fat and calories. Have breakfast before going to school. Foods with calcium should be eaten at least 3 times a day. Children their age should be drinking skim or 1% milk. Eat meals together as a family as much as possible.
2. Get some exercise regularly. This means doing something that involves good physical activity almost every day. For some, organized sports may be the way to get this exercise, but for others it may mean individual activities of walking, running, biking, swimming or just playing outside. Don't forget safety when participating in physical activity-use appropriate mouth guards, eye protection and helmets.
3. Brush teeth at least twice each day. Avoid snacking on sugary foods. Make regular visits to the dentist.
4. Get enough sleep. Establish a regular schedule of sleep that is not too different on the weekdays and weekends.
5. Don't watch too much television or spend too much time with the computer, tablet or video games. Limit this "screen time" to 1-2 hours maximum per day. Parents should monitor activity on the computer and internet. Read for pleasure.
6. Learn to swim.
7. Make sure all car rides are safe rides:
 - a) Children this age should be riding in the back seat only.
 - b) Always wear a seat belt.
 - c) Children must be in a booster seat unless over age 8 and 4ft 9in tall.
 - d) For information on the latest recommendations and considerations, please visit healthychildren.org and search for "Car Seat Safety".
8. Observe bicycle safety precautions, especially wearing a helmet for every bicycle ride. Children must be trained in bicycle operation. Until a child has been observed riding confidently and following basic rules of the road, riding must be restricted to sidewalks, paths, and driveways.
9. Rollerblades, scooters and skateboards can be great exercise, but can result in injuries. Helmets and wrist guards should be worn to prevent serious injury. These activities should not occur where there is traffic.
10. Firearms are very dangerous for children of all ages and should not be kept at home. If they must be kept at home, they must be stored unloaded and locked up. Children should be taught never to handle a firearm they might encounter elsewhere, such as at a friend's home. Parents should make it a point of inquiring about the presence of firearms before allowing their child to visit a friend's home.

ADVICE TO PARENTS

1. Establish fair rules to be followed at home with respect to such activities as bedtime, TV watching and helping with chores (setting the table, keeping one's room neat).
2. Spend active time with your child. Show interest in their daily school activities.
3. An adult should be present at home to supervise your child's activities. Know where your child is at all times.

4. Provide an allowance and guidance on how to manage it.
5. Praise and encourage your child's activities. Contribute to your child's self-esteem. Show affection. If there are siblings, promote the individual strengths of each child.
6. Promote activities outside the home, such as sports, Cub Scouts, Brownies, church or synagogue groups, summer camps, etc. In planning these activities, discuss them with your child, listening to their interests. Don't forget to allow for unplanned "free play" time.
7. Don't underestimate your importance as a role model.
8. Encourage reading or hobbies. Obtain a library card for your child.
9. Ensure a level of sex education appropriate to your child's age and interest. Answer questions factually. It is very appropriate for parents to initiate discussion. We have some favorite read-together books that can help.

SCHOOL

To a certain extent, downplay the importance of school performance. Teach your child the joy of learning. Dwell on, "WHAT did you do in school today?" instead of, "HOW did you do in school today?" If there are problems with school performance, talk to the teachers and call on us to help.

R_x for Healthy Active Living

Name _____ Date _____

Ideas for Living a Healthy Active Life

- 5** Eat at least 5 fruits and vegetables every day.
- 2** Limit screen time (for example, TV, video games, computer) to 2 hours or less per day.
- 1** Get 1 hour or more of physical activity every day.
- 0** Drink fewer sugar-sweetened drinks. Try water and low-fat milk instead.

My Goals (choose one you would like to work on first)

- Eat _____ fruits and vegetables each day.
- Get _____ minutes of physical activity each day.
- Reduce screen time to _____ minutes per day.
- Reduce number of sugared drinks to _____ per day.

Patient or Parent/Guardian signature

Doctor signature

From Your Doctor

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