



## WELL CHILD CARE AT 4-5 YEARS

### NUTRITION AND EXERCISE

- Mealtime should be a pleasant time for the family to get together and share stories and experiences. Turn off the TV during meals.
- Give small portions of food initially. If your child is still hungry, let her have seconds. Keep in mind all food groups and portion sizes (meat, dairy, grains, fruits, vegetables). Offer new foods to try and taste.
- Start each day with breakfast.
- Choose and eat healthy snacks. Avoid junk food, fast foods, and sugary drinks such as soda and juice. Offer water often and 3 cups of nonfat or low fat milk a day.
- Children watch what their parents eat, so set a good example.
- Children should have at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day outside of school.

### DEVELOPMENT AND DISCIPLINE

- Children at this age are curious and very imaginative. They start to dress themselves, understand rules in a game, have better balancing and climbing skills, can cut and paste, enjoy jokes, and are very talkative. They also play well with other children and have friends.
- Be sure to praise your child when you see them doing something good. Tell your child how proud you are when he/she does things that help you or others.
- Allow privacy while your child is changing clothes or using the bathroom. Let your child know that you think it is good when your child desires privacy on their own.
- Give your child a few simple chores, like picking up toys or clothes and helping set or clean the table.
- Teach your child to wash hands with soap and water after using the toilet and before eating.
- Children may still wet the bed at this age. If this happens, regularly talk to your doctor.
- Breaking rules occasionally happens at this age. Punishment for dangerous or hurtful behaviors is necessary. Time out in a quiet, boring corner for 4-5 minutes is usually an effective punishment. Ask your doctor if you have other concerns about behavior.
- It is important to set rules about television watching. Limit total electronic media time (television, computers, video games, etc.) to no more than 2 hours per day. Find other activities you can do with your child such as reading, hobbies, and physical activities. Children should not be allowed to watch shows with violence or sexual behaviors.

### SAFETY TIPS

- **Car Safety**
  - Never leave your child alone in the car.
  - Everyone in the car must always wear seat belts or be in an age and weight appropriate booster or car seat.
- **Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety**
  - Teach your child to never ride a tricycle, bicycle, or scooter in the street.
  - All family members should use a helmet and knee, wrist, and elbow guards when using scooters, skates, skateboards, and bikes.
  - Supervise all street crossings and teach your child about traffic lights and how to use a crosswalk. Your child may start to look in both directions but do not depend on his/her ability to safely cross a street alone.

- **Poisons**
  - Teach your child to never take medicines without supervision and not to eat unknown substances. Label and lock up medicines, cleaning supplies, alcohol, poisons, power tools, matches, and lighters.
  - Put the poison center number on all telephones. The number is **1-800-222-1222**.
- **Safety Around Strangers**
  - Teach your child the first and last name of all family members.
  - Have your child learn his/her address and telephone number and how to contact you at work.
  - Teach your child to never go anywhere with a stranger or to open the front door unsupervised.
  - Teach your child the difference between “good” and “bad” touches. Tell them how to say “no” to bad touches and to tell you if it occurs.
- **Avoid Injuries**
  - Do not allow your child to be near knives, power tools, or mowers.
  - Use stair gates, window guards, childproof safety latches, locks on cabinets, and outlet covers.
  - Never leave your child alone near water.
  - Continuously watch your child near a swimming pool. A pool/spa should be fenced with a self-latching gate. If you have a swimming pool, adhere to the recommended safety guidelines by the AAP.
- **Sunscreen**
  - Apply a sunscreen with at least an SPF of 45 or greater that protects against UVA and UVB rays. Reapply every 2 hours or after sweating or swimming.
  - Wear a hat with a 3 inch brim, sunglasses, and cotton clothing with a tight weave.
  - Avoid peak sun intensity hours (10am – 4pm) and stay in the shade if possible.
  - Use extra caution near water, sand, and snow, for they reflect UV rays and may result in sunburn more quickly.
- **Safety Tips for Parents**
  - Be prepared, plan for emergencies, have a fire escape plan.
  - Learn child CPR.
  - Install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in hallway and near the bedrooms. Check alarms every 6 months.

## DENTAL

- Your child should brush teeth regularly after meals and before bedtime and floss at bedtime.
- Make an appointment for your child to see the dentist for regular checkups every 6 months.
- Discuss with your doctor adequate fluoride exposure for your child. Store fluoride and toothpaste out of a child’s reach.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

- Your child will probably receive vaccination shots. After a shot, your child may run a fever and become irritable for about 48 hours. Your child may also have some soreness, redness, and swelling where a shot was given. Cool compresses and acetaminophen should help decrease injection pain; sometimes warm compresses and gentle massage can help decrease muscle pain.
- Call your child’s health provider immediately if:
  - Your child has a fever over 105 degrees F (40.5 C)
  - Your child has a severe allergic reaction beginning within 2 hours of the shot (for example hives, wheezing or noisy breathing, swelling of the mouth or throat)
  - Your child has any other unusual reaction

## NEXT VISIT

- A once a year checkup is recommended.