



The Parent's Guide to **Pediatric Health**



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Introduction

As a parent, your child's well-being is your top priority. There is no better feeling than the peace of mind that comes with knowing your child is happy, healthy, and well cared for. As a healthcare provider in Arkansas, we understand the value of helping families grow and thrive together. That is why we at ARcare have made this comprehensive guide to pediatric health, to help you and yours find new ways to stay healthy together, and know what to do if your health or theirs is at risk.

ARcare is a local care provider that has helped Arkansans for over thirty years. Our 44 family practice clinics located throughout the state have upheld our mission to administer medical services to all who need them, regardless of coverage. With board-certified providers, community health centers, and the latest medical technology, ARcare sees individuals and families of all ages and income levels, and ensures them the highest quality care.

CHAPTER 1:

6 Ways to Keep Your Children Active Inside When It is Cold Outside

As winter weather starts ushering kids inside, their activity levels tend to plummet. Thankfully, you can keep your kids active and healthy through the winter with fun indoor activities.

As the wind, rain and cold weather hit the streets, many kids lose interest in the outdoors. But, that does not mean they no longer need exercise. . Daily physical activity is a big morale booster, especially during the winter months, as it helps establish a healthy routine, and maintain a strong sense of well-being. You can encourage your family to keep moving through the winter with these six fun activities.

Dance Off

With a dance-off, you can tap into your kids' love of silliness, and activate their competitive streak. To start this activity, have your kids stand together in a circle, and then play some up-tempo music. As everyone shows off their best moves, keep the fun going by shouting encouragement and cheering one another on. After each song, take a one to two-minute break, and then jump, shimmy, or slide right into the next track.

Yoga Moves

Interactive yoga routines [encourage kids to get moving](#) and test the limits of their strength, endurance, and flexibility. Choose between five to seven kid-friendly yoga moves for each session, and guide your kids slowly through each one. Excellent yoga moves for kids include the butterfly, cat, dragon, dolphin, and camel poses. Encourage your kids to hold their poses while practicing mindful breathing to support the health of their bodies and minds.

Parkour Course

A [parkour course](#) built in the middle of your living room might sound a little chaotic, but it can actually direct your kids' energy in a positive, constructive way. With just a few household items, you and your family can create a challenging, yet rewarding obstacle course. You can put out cushions for leapfrog, or arrange a low-hanging net of string for army crawls. Encourage your kids to help build the obstacle course to get them excited for the activity.

Balance Games

Your kids do not need much room to play balance games that can have a positive impact on their health. The balance games focus on building the core muscles and teaching kids to remain mindful when working with their bodies. You can set up balance beams, or simply draw a line on the floor with chalk to use as a guide.

Jump Rope

Jump rope has an amazing ability to get your kids' heart rates pumping within a short period of time. This activity can be safely enjoyed inside as long as there is nothing breakable in the vicinity of the rope. A garage is often a great place for jump rope, as moving your vehicle outside makes it easy to make a lot of room. Your kids can play jump rope on their own, or with a group of friends. [Try out fun variations](#), such as Double Dutch, and speed jumping to increase the challenge for your kids.

Balloon Bounce

Keep your kids moving and thinking with balloon bounce games. Simply fill up a balloon with regular air and challenge your kids to never let it hit the floor. Be prepared for the games to continue through meals and other activities, because once begun, the balloon bounce is just too fun to stop.

CHAPTER 2:

Essential Tips for Keeping Your Kids Active and Healthy

Getting regular physical activity is important for kids in order to stay healthy, especially when they are not in school. Find out how to make sure your kids get exercise on a daily basis this summer.

During the summer, kids typically have plenty of time to spend being active, since they no longer have daily homework or school activities. However, some kids can fall into sedentary routines, rather than staying on their feet, which is not good for their health. With a few tips from your friends and medical providers at ARcare, you can help your kids set healthy habits this summer that they can put to use all year long. Keep in mind that in addition to exercise, you should also make sure you find a primary care clinic near you so that your kids can get routine physicals and prompt care if they get sick or injured.

Focus on Fun

It really does not matter what [physical activity](#) your kids engage in, as long as they are active and on their feet. Rather than sitting for long periods of time, they can boost their health and happiness with the smallest of activities. Let your kids run around, use their

imagination, and explore your yard or the local park, which can provide them with plenty of exercise and fresh air. Making physical activity a fun playtime activity, rather than a strict regimen, helps motivate kids to stay active.

Plan for Rainy Days

Fresh air is good for the whole family, but the weather does not always cooperate. On days when it is rainy, stormy, or too hot to be outside, give your kids a way to stay active indoors. Put their favorite music on so they can dance around the house, or let them play video games that require them to be up and active, such as fitness games with motion controls. This helps ensure that your kids will still get exercise, even when they cannot go outdoors and run around.

Set a Good Example

Your kids learn by watching you, so set a good example for them. [Set aside time to exercise each day](#), and encourage your kids to join you. You can do a family workout routine, or take walks or bike rides together every day. This is a great way to motivate kids to build good exercise habits while also spending more time together as a family on a regular basis.

Plan Play Date Activities

When your kids have a play date with a friend or relative, plan backyard games or other activities for them to do instead of having them play inside. You can also make plans with other parents to bring the kids to a local pool or park for even more fun and exercise during play dates.

CHAPTER 3:

What to Do If Your Child Comes Home with Lice

There is no need to panic if you find out your child has lice; you just need to know a few simple steps to eliminate them properly. Use the following guidelines to help combat lice from your primary care doctor in Arkansas.

Lice are small, parasitic insects that are most commonly transferred between children in preschool and elementary school. Lice do not carry any diseases, and do not cause any harm to children, adults, or pets. However, these tiny bugs can be a big nuisance, especially if not treated quickly.. They cause heavy itching of the scalp, and are quick to multiply and spread. Here are simple instructions for the proper treatment to remove lice.

What are Lice?

Lice are six-legged parasites, only about 2-3 mm long. Lice live on human heads (infesting about 6-12 million per year in the United States). The tiny insects can be hard to detect. Female lice produce eggs, called “nits”. They glue the nits to human hair strands near the scalp, which makes them even more difficult to find.

The Facts About Lice

Fortunately, lice have a short lifespan.

- Lice become dehydrated and soon die when they are away from access to the human head, where their food (blood) and warmth they need for survival is located.
- Lice cannot fly, jump, or hop. Therefore, contact between people is typically necessary for lice to spread from one head to another.
- Lice are, however, quite strong in other ways. They can survive submerged in water for as long as six hours. This is why lice are not killed by showering or swimming.

Before Treatment, Check Everyone for Lice

Before beginning treatment of one family member for lice, check everyone in the household for the bugs. Treat everyone at the same time in order to help prevent family members from passing the lice back and forth. Also, tell the parents of your children’s friends and classmates to check for lice, and offer treatment instructions.

To eliminate lice:

- Wash all clothing and bedding used by a person with lice during the 48 hours before starting treatment. This will wash away lice that have fallen off of hair.

- Washing stuffed toys or keeping these removed from the house may be recommended in extreme cases. Alternatively, place toys in a dryer for about 20 minutes to kill the lice.
- Treat for live bugs instead of searching for suspected nits, because nits are so difficult to identify. Also, nits that are not near the scalp are likely to have already hatched, so they are not worth the time to look for.

Repeat Lice Treatment from Your Local Medical Clinic

Some lice nits are resistant to treatment with over-the-counter medicated shampoos. You must treat all affected members of the household again, ten days after completing the first round of treatments. The second treatment will kill lice that have hatched from any remaining nits before they become mature enough to lay eggs.

If you detect any lice after completing two treatments using over-the-counter lice shampoos, you should see your family doctor at your local medical clinic, who will probably prescribe a stronger medication.

CHAPTER 4

Signs that Your Child Struggles With Attention Deficit Disorder

Many have misunderstood attention deficit disorder (ADD) as a child simply being bad. However, researchers have identified ADD as a neurological disorder with effective treatment plans.

Some children are more at risk of developing ADD than others. Research shows that there can be [genetic influences in the development](#) of the condition. ADD is also more prevalent in children with low birth weights, brain injuries, and exposure to environmental toxins while in the womb or after birth.

Signs and Symptoms of ADD

There are many [signs and symptoms](#) of ADD.

Difficulty waiting

Children with ADD can struggle to stand or sit still for long periods. You may notice that your child cannot cope with waiting rooms or class assemblies. They may fidget, talk at inappropriate times, or become distracted by something else in order to cope with the discomfort of having to wait quietly.

Emotional outbursts

When a child has ADD, they may find it challenging to keep their emotions in check. Their impulses can feel overwhelming, which is further compounded by how others respond to them. In younger children, this can look like a temper tantrum. In older children, this can manifest as a [form of anxiety](#).

Unfinished or incomplete tasks

When playing with your child, you might notice they begin another game before finishing one they were already playing. The same can happen while reading to your child. They may want to start a new book before finishing the other one. These behaviors can be symptoms of ADD and other related disorders.

Lack of focus

Even when a child with ADD is being spoken to directly, their eyes, ears, and mind can wander, losing focus and making it difficult to concentrate.

Frequent mistakes

Every child makes mistakes. A child with ADD, however, typically makes more mistakes than does an average child, because the child with ADD struggles to follow instructions as closely. This stems in part from their inability to focus well.

Disruptive behavior

Children with ADD need attention. They may, for example, find it difficult if a teacher is focusing on the whole class rather than them alone. In a sense, any attention is good attention to a child with ADD, and so the behavior can range from excited and energetic to disruptive and destructive.

Interrupting

Interrupting alone is not a sign of ADD, but when combined with some of the symptoms listed above, it is certainly relevant. As mentioned, a child with ADD finds it challenging to wait for long periods or pay attention during lengthy conversations. They will occasionally interrupt someone when they are talking because they were unable to focus on the conversation.

Trouble in the evenings and at night

A child with ADD might find it [difficult to fall and stay asleep](#). ADD can cause feelings of hyperactivity, making sleep a less appealing option at the end of the day. Your child might also wake frequently or very early in the morning.

Difficulty sharing and taking turns

Fundamental sharing and turn-taking skills are taught to children from a young age. Children with ADD, however, can take longer to learn these skills or may never develop them at all. If teachers say your child has difficulty sharing, then it could be a symptom of ADD.

Easily Bored.

Perhaps you often hear your child tell you they are bored. They may be less able than others to play for long periods, and bounce between many different games in a short amount of time. Consider becoming [highly creative in organizing tasks and activities](#) to help your child improve in this area.

Anxiety and avoidance

Lastly, children with ADD can struggle so much with their symptoms that they become socially anxious and avoid everyday activities. They are more likely to avoid complicated activities like board games that require focus, as well as long waiting times. If your child exhibits anxiety, then take them to healthcare professional to have this assessed.

CHAPTER 5:

Trouble Getting Your Child to Bed? Try These 5 Things!

Most active, healthy children typically have no problem falling and staying asleep. But, even the youngest and most active kids can suffer insomnia from time to time. Find out how to make bedtime go more smoothly in your home with these tips from ARcare.

Getting quality sleep every night is an important part of childhood development. Children need their rest in order to stay happy and healthy. If your kids are having trouble going to bed, here are a few tips you can try, depending on their ages.

Stick to a Bedtime Routine

No matter what age you are, having a bedtime routine is a great way to ensure regular, restful sleep. Your kids' routine might include taking a bath, brushing their teeth, putting on pajamas, or reading a bedtime story. It is important to keep each child's bedtime routine consistent so that they know what to expect. When children become familiar with a bedtime routine, this can help them feel more secure and relaxed about going to sleep.

Maintain a Quiet Home Before Bedtime

Keeping your home as quiet and calm as possible at bedtime can help your children wind down before going to sleep. Older kids, such as school-aged kids, should read or do another relaxing activity before bed. You can help younger kids, such as [infants and toddlers](#), stay calm by lowering the lights and playing some soft music.

Set Up a Comfortable Sleep Environment

Younger and older children can have trouble falling asleep when they are uncomfortable. Make sure that your child's bedroom is not too warm for them, and give them soft sheets to lie down on. You should also limit the number of stuffed animals they bring to bed with them so that they will not feel crowded.

Create a Reward Chart

Keeping a reward chart is an effective way to motivate children to go to bed at the designated bedtime. Whether you have a toddler or a child who is in school already, a reward chart builds a positive link between going to bed on time and being rewarded. You can put stars or stickers on this chart for each night your child gets to sleep on time. When your child reaches a certain number of stickers or stars, or when the entire chart is full, consider giving them a bigger reward for their accomplishment.

CHAPTER 6:

Signs that your Child might be Stressed & what to do about it

Often, even as adults, it can be hard to recognize when we are feeling anxious, sad, overwhelmed, or stressed. This is even more true of our children, who have a hard time naming their feelings, let alone knowing what to do with them.

There are signs that your child might be stressed that you can look for in order to help them work through those emotions and overcome them. At ARcare, we provide family medical care in Arkansas, and can work with you to help you guide your child, and lighten their stress load.

To start, let us explore [possible stress factors](#) for your child. While you may remember your own childhood as relaxing and carefree, the world today is very different from that of yesteryear, especially for children. Your child is constantly bombarded with, which can make it difficult to enjoy childhood as it should be. Below are some things that could be adding to their already full plate.

Not Enough Play

Children today are expected to commit to many things, especially during the school year. Things like sports, enrichment classes, holiday travel, and volunteer commitments all take up time your child could be spending on things they want to do. Most people tend to think that the busier a child is, the happier they will be. However, children need play to enrich their imagination, learn how to communicate with others, and advance their motor skills.

Family Dynamics

A study published in 2019 found that the divorce rate for [U.S. households was 53%](#). Divorce has a huge impact on a child's life. From changing routines, to emotional stress, to feeling stigmatized socially, it is fair to say children are as affected by divorce as their parents. Children are also hyper-present in adult situations. With social media and more open parenting styles, children are more aware than ever of financial struggle, extended family feuds, and other hardships within their families.

Too Much Screen Time

Studies are showing more and more that increased screen time is having a negative impact on children. While sometimes a tablet, video game console, or smartphone can be an easy way to get your child to behave, but too much screen time can have negative effects in the long run. Screen time does not allow children to handle delayed gratification. It demobilizes your child, and prevents him or her from getting the exercise they need to stay active and healthy. Screen time can overload your child's sensory system, disrupt their sleep patterns, and more.

While the stresses above may not be the only issues impacting your child, they seem to be some of the most prevalent. With a little discovery on your part, you should be able to see some signs that your child might be stressed. Let us cover what some of those signs may look like, and how you can help your child cope.

Withdrawing from or Complaining About Activities

If your child seems disinterested in a sport or activity, it may be time to review your calendar and remove a few commitments. Consistent complaining, unusual attachment to you, and lethargy toward something they used to love could be signs your child needs a break. Talk with your child about their calendar, and offer to remove things that are not bringing them joy. Making room for quality family time, relaxation, and unstructured play with their friends or siblings will go a long way towards making your child feel more relaxed, more loved, and much less stressed.

In a divorced household, your child may become clingy with one or both parents when it is time to transition households, which can be a sign of stress. Acting out in school or withdrawing socially are other common responses in children with divorced parents. Try to keep adult conversations between adults when making the transition, but encourage open, supportive communication with your children about their feelings.

Keep your child's routine as consistent as possible. Routine allows children to feel secure and know they can depend on you. Schedule one on one time with them, and try to avoid saying things like "we cannot afford that," or "we are not going to the Christmas

party because Aunt Cindy and I are fighting.” You can deliver hard news to your child in a way that does not cause them stress.

Moderation of Electronic Devices

Trouble falling asleep, waking up, and undue crankiness can indicate that your child is spending too much time with their electronic devices. If you notice your child’s attention span getting shorter, or they are responding with angry outbursts when they do not get what they want right away, it is time to consider hard limits on screen time. This can be hard for both of you at first, but you will see your child’s behaviors change for the better very quickly. Set a daily time limit for your child where they can play their favorite game, or have them earn a certain amount of screen time by doing chores around the house. Do not allow your child to take their device to bed with them, and stay consistent with your rules. The less time your child spends with their electronic device, the more opportunities they have to spend energy exercising, playing with their friends, and growing their own imaginations.

CHAPTER 7

7 Ways to Reduce Your Child's Sugar Intake

A child's craving for sugary food is a universal phenomenon. Whichever form you present it, whether as candy, cakes, or ice cream, kids are sure to relish it. In addition to sweets, kids consume sugar in the form of packaged or processed food. This high consumption of sugar naturally makes parents worry about the health of their child.

What Are the Main Sources of Sugar in Children?

Children consume sugar through the following sources:

- **Bakery and confectionery products** such as cookies, plain milk chocolate, candies, cakes and pastries, buns, and jam and chocolate spread.
- **Ready to eat Cereals** including corn flakes, flavored oats, and Muesli.
- **Beverages** like commercially available fruit juice, soft drinks, and aerated drinks.
- **Dairy products** like flavored milk, flavored yogurt, and ice cream.
- **Condiments** like sauce, ketchup, and salad dressing.

The Effects of Consuming Sugar

According to [a study conducted by the American Heart Association](#), the recommended sugar intake for children between 2-18 years of age is 6 teaspoons per day. Consuming excess sugar can have many adverse effects on your child's health.

Tooth cavities: Cavities in the teeth are the most common effect of consuming excess sugar. When a child consumes sugar or sweet products, the bacteria in the mouth comes in contact with the sugar, producing an acid which attacks the teeth and causes a cavity. When a child sucks candies or lollipops, the exposure to the sugar is prolonged, and can cause more damage to the teeth.

Similarly, drinking soft drinks and other fruit juices also increases sugar exposure, and leads to cavity formation. If your child is consuming a lot of sweets, you should visit a family practice center near you, and get his teeth cleaned at regular intervals to prevent the onset of cavities.

Obesity: The chances of developing obesity increases if the child consumes more sugar. The calorie content in sugar is very high. Thus, if the child consumes more sugar, it results in a higher calorie intake. A high calorie intake can eventually lead to excess weight gain and obesity. An examination by a family practitioner will reveal whether your child is obese or not.

Low nutritional level: The nutrient content in sugar is very low. Thus, consuming more sugar will only increase calorie intake without providing any nutritional value. Kids usually consume sugar-laden food at the cost of nutritious food. Moreover, as the nutrient level of the body decreases, the body's ability to ward off infection also decreases. This can speed up tooth decay caused as a result of excess sugar consumption.

If your child is consuming a lot of sugar and falls sick occasionally, then you should consult a doctor in a pediatric care unit. He will be able to assess the nutritional level of the child and whether he has Type 2 diabetes based on the main symptoms of diabetes.

Healthy Alternatives to Sugar

The best way to keep your child happy and fit is to provide him healthy alternatives to sugar.

Few of the healthy options are:

Honey: Honey is a natural sweetener and has many health benefits. It is anti-microbial and has anti-inflammatory properties.

Honey can be used as a spread, in smoothies, sauces, and also as a salad dressing.

Date paste: Dates make for a healthy snack that is rich in iron.

Date paste can help to satiate your child's sweet tooth, and provide a steady source of nutrients. You can prepare date paste by blending a cup of dates with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of water and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of vanilla. Date paste can be used as a spread, as well as a base for smoothies; it can even be used to make cakes and salad dressing.

Coconut sugar: Coconut sugar is unrefined sugar made from the sap of the flower bud of the coconut palm. Hence it is more nutritious and less harmful for kids.

Coconut sugar is the best substitute for white or brown sugar. Hence, it can be used in all dishes where sugar is used. Coconut sugar is unrefined sugar made from the sap of the flower bud of the coconut palm. It is much more nutritious and less harmful than regular refined sugars. Coconut sugar is the best substitute for white or brown sugar and can be used in all dishes where sugar is used.

How to Reduce Sugar Consumption in Children

As a parent, there are many options available to reduce your child's exposure to sugary food.

1. Serve homemade food: Food that is commercially available contains a lot of sugar and salt to enhance its taste. If you cook food at home, you will have better control over the amount of sugar your family eats. This way you can drastically reduce their sugar intake.

2. Carry homemade snacks and juices: When you are out for a movie or a picnic, there is a tendency to buy snacks from snack counters or vending machines. If you carry home-cooked snacks or fruit juices with you, the quantity of sugar consumption can be reduced.

3. Encourage them to eat fruits: Commercially available fruit juices contain added sugar, which is not good for the health of your kid. Instead, encourage him to eat a

balanced diet consisting of fresh fruits and vegetables. If he is not willing, you can make fruit juice at home devoid of sugar.

4. Cut back on desserts: If your child is used to having dessert after every meal, it is time to break the habit. Provide them dessert only after one meal. Lunch is the ideal time to provide dessert, as the sugar consumed will be used up while playing and running around.

5. Cut back on fat-free food: Most of the food items that are marketed as 'fat-free' have extra sugar added to enhance the taste (e.g., fat-free yogurt). If you feed this type of food to your kids, it will do more harm than good.

6. Provide sugar substitutes: Sugar substitutes may not be as harmful as sugar. At the same time, sugar substitutes contain nutrients that are good for the body. Examples of sugar substitutes are honey and dates. You can include these items while making shakes and smoothies.

7. Talk to your child: If your child is old enough to understand the ill effects of excess sugar consumption, you should explain these effects to him. This might prompt him to cut back on sugar laden sweets and drinks.

CHAPTER 8:

A Parent's Guide to Helping Your Child Learn to Manage Diabetes

Helping your child manage their diabetes may seem cumbersome at first. However, over time it becomes a regular part of you and your child's daily routine. If managed properly, diabetes should not keep your child from having a normal, happy, and successful life.

Types of Diabetes

There are two main types of diabetes that affect children. Type 1 more commonly develops during childhood. Type 2 typically occurs in adults over age 40 who are overweight or obese. However, as child obesity rates rise, so do instances of Type 2 diabetes in children and young adults.

Diabetes is a disorder that affects your metabolism by impacting the body's ability to efficiently produce or use insulin. Sugars and carbohydrates provide our body with glucose, a material that acts as fuel for our cells. In order for our cells to use glucose, they

need a hormone called insulin, which is found in the blood. Diabetes affects your body's ability to produce insulin, the ability to efficiently use insulin, or a combination of both.

Type 1

When you have Type 1 diabetes, your body is not able to produce enough insulin. This makes it impossible for the body to properly metabolize glucose, and so it builds up in the blood. This leads to too high blood sugar levels, which causes the these main [symptoms of diabetes](#):

- Increased urination
- Thirst
- Increased appetite
- Weight loss

Type 1 diabetes can occur at any age. However, it appears more commonly at ages 5-6 and 11-13. Often, one of the first symptoms is an increase in urination, both in frequency and in amount. Your child will likely also experience other symptoms such as fatigue, weight loss, and increased appetite. If not diagnosed in time, your child can become ill.

Type 2

When you have [Type 2 diabetes](#), your body is not able to effectively use its insulin.

This type of diabetes is often seen in overweight or obese adults; but, it can develop in children, particularly if they are overweight or obese. People with Type 2 diabetes may not experience any symptoms, or the symptoms may be quite minor. It is common that Type 2 diabetes may be discovered by a routine blood test.

These are the main symptoms of Type 2 diabetes:

- Increased hunger and thirst (especially after eating)
- Frequent urination
- Unexplained weight loss (even though you are eating and feel hungry)
- Fatigue
- Blurred vision

Diabetes Management for Children

When creating a diabetes treatment plan for your child, it is important to give them responsibilities, rather than leave them completely reliant on the adults in their lives. This will allow your child to take ownership of their body and feel more independent.

Once you have a routine diabetes management plan, life should slowly return to normal. A child with diabetes can still do much of the same things as any other child, including eating out, exercising, and going on trips.

Below are the essential components of a successful diabetes management plan.

Closely Monitor Blood Sugar

You and your child's doctor will create a routine to regularly check your child's blood sugar level. This is typically done in two ways.

The first is [conducting frequent blood sugar checks](#) using finger sticks. Your child will need to do this at least four times per day, maybe more.

Another is a continuous glucose monitor (CGMs). These are worn devices that automatically measure blood sugar every few minutes, via a sensor inserted under the skin. These provide a more accurate reading of your child's blood sugar level, and can help make diabetes management more convenient.

Insulin Therapy

Treatment for Type 1 diabetes requires your child to take insulin. There are many different methods of administering insulin, including syringes, insulin pens, and [insulin pumps](#).

There is [an alternative to insulin called incretins](#). They work by helping the pancreas produce insulin, which lowers blood sugar levels, and by lowering glucagon, another hormone produced by the pancreas. Lowering glucagon also helps keep blood sugar low.

Talk to your child's doctor about the best treatment option for them.

Diet

Diet is an important part of managing diabetes. You must be especially vigilant of the amount of carbohydrates your child consumes, as these foods increase blood sugar levels. Creating a strict diet for a child, however, can be difficult, especially with birthday parties, holidays, and events with other children. You do not want your child to miss out

on the fun, and thankfully, you do not have to.

It is possible for your child to partake in these fun events, as long as they are aware of their carbohydrate intake and blood sugar level. Talk to your doctor about making a special plan for events, and plan for them with your child. Teach them to ask what is in the food they eat, to count carbs, and to understand how to handle fluctuations in blood sugar. For example, exercise can help reduce blood sugar levels when they get too high.

Exercise

It is true that exercise can lower blood sugar levels, which is why many people with diabetes avoid it. However, it is possible to exercise safely, as long as you properly monitor your blood sugar. Exercise is especially important for children, as it is an essential method of play. Instead of forbidding your child to exercise, create a diabetes treatment plan that includes exercise in it.

Inform Friends, Family, Teachers, and Babysitters about Your Child's Diabetes

It is important that your entire community be aware of your child's diabetes, some people more than others. For example, any primary caregivers should be familiar with your child's treatment plan. This includes teachers, babysitters, and family that see the child often. Beyond knowing what to do in an emergency, these people can offer emotional support to your family.

CHAPTER 9:

Kid-friendly recipes for children with Diabetes

As a parent, you understand the value of providing your child with a safe, happy, and healthy childhood. From giving them the best education to embracing their creativity and imagination, most everything you do is done with them in mind.

So, when something outside of your control negatively affects your child, it is natural for you to worry about their health and well-being. Childhood diseases, like diabetes, are sources of anxiety that all parents grapple with.

Thankfully, there are things you can do at home to help combat [this all-too-common disease](#). And, if your child has diabetes, there are ways to easily manage the condition.

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a disorder that affects how the body processes and uses sugars. If left unchecked, it can cause substantial damage to the body. There are many types of

diabetes, but [type 1 is most common in children](#).

Because kids can have difficulty communicating discomfort or identifying health issues, it is important to [know the main symptoms of diabetes](#) as a parent. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the main symptoms and keep an eye out for increased thirst and appetite, as well as weight loss.

Though diabetes can cause severe damage to the body if not managed properly, it should not prevent your [child from enjoying their life](#), and making the most of their childhood. Tremendous progress has been made in the [treatment of all types of diabetes](#), and treatment is not limited to prescriptions and hospital visits.

Make a content calendar

How Diet Can Help

Because diabetes is a disease that is so closely tied to food, dietary changes can play a critical role in improvement and relief. While kids can be picky, incorporating a few simple, kid-friendly recipes for children with diabetes into their diet can be a cornerstone of their diabetes management.

When combined with blood sugar regulation, appropriate exercise, and other strategies recommended by your doctor, dietary change can be tremendously helpful!

To help you get started, we have listed some simple, delicious recipes below. [There are plenty out there](#) to discover, but these are among our favorites! Make sure to follow the

included links to find even [more recipes](#).

Example Recipes:

Crock-Pot Apple-Cinnamon Oatmeal

Prep time: 5 minutes

What you need:

- 1 cup steel-cut oats
- 1 cup skim milk (or milk substitute, such as almond or soy milk)
- 3 cups water
- 1 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 cup chopped nuts

Equipment and supplies:

- Slow cooker
- Measuring cups and spoons

What to do:

1. Place oats, milk, water, applesauce, and cinnamon into the slow cooker. Stir, cover, and set to low.
2. Cook for 7 hours.
3. Top each serving with 1 tablespoon of the nuts and enjoy! You can also top your

oatmeal with 1 tablespoon of raisins, but this will increase the amount of sugar in the oatmeal.

Nutrition facts (per serving):

- 230 calories
- 8g protein
- 5g fat
- 1g sat. fat
- 39g carbohydrate
- 6g fiber
- 0mg cholesterol
- 35mg sodium
- 10g sugars

Serves: 4

Serving size: 1 cup

Baked Salmon Sticks with Creamy Lemon-Dill Dip

Prep time: 40 minutes

What you need:

Ingredients for the salmon sticks:

- 2 large egg whites
- 1 cup panko breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons flat leaf parsley, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons parmesan cheese
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1-pound skinless salmon fillet, cut into 1/2-inch strips

Ingredients for dip:

- 1/3 cup fat-free mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup fat-free Greek yogurt
- juice and zest of half a lemon
- 1 teaspoon fresh dill, chopped

Equipment and supplies:

- Cooking spray
- Baking sheet and cooking rack or parchment paper
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Whisk or mixer
- 2 large bowls
- 1 small bowl

What to do:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (204°C). Line a rimmed baking sheet with a cooking rack and spray generously with cooking spray. If you do not have a cooking rack, line a baking sheet with parchment paper that has been sprayed with cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, whisk or beat egg whites until they are light and foamy. In another large bowl, stir together the panko breadcrumbs, parsley, parmesan cheese, and pepper. Dip each salmon stick into the egg whites and then press into the crumb mixture, making sure the crumbs coat the salmon.
3. Place salmon strips onto prepared baking sheet and spray with cooking spray. Bake for 20 minutes.
4. While salmon is baking, make the dip: In a small bowl, whisk together mayonnaise, yogurt, lemon juice, lemon zest, and dill.
5. Serve salmon sticks warm with a small amount of dipping sauce.

Nutrition facts (per serving):

- 270 calories
- 30g protein
- 7g fat
- 2g sat. fat
- 19g carbohydrate
- 3g fiber
- 60mg cholesterol
- 350mg sodium

- 3g sugars

Serves: 4

Serving size: 198g

PB & Banana Chocolate Chip Cookies

Prep time: 1 hour, 30 minutes

What you need:

- 2 cups uncooked regular oats
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1-1/2 cups mashed banana
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Equipment and supplies:

- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- 2 mixing bowls
- 1 baking sheet

What to do:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (176°C).
2. Combine the first 5 ingredients in a large bowl and stir well.
3. In a separate bowl, combine the banana, oil, and vanilla and stir well.
4. Add the banana mixture to dry ingredients, stirring as you add.

5. Let the mixture sit for 15 minutes.
6. Place rounded tablespoon-size scoops of dough onto ungreased baking sheet.
7. Bake for 15 minutes or until lightly golden.
8. Transfer the cookies to wire racks. Cool completely before serving.

Nutrition facts (per serving):

- 120 calories
- 3g protein
- 9g fat
- 1.5g sat. fat
- 10g carbohydrate
- 2g fiber
- 0mg cholesterol
- 55 mg sodium
- 4g sugars

Serves: about 12

Serving size: 1 cookie

Note: Nutritional analysis may vary depending on ingredient brands used.

Reviewed by: Mary L. Gavin, MD

Our Final Thoughts

These and other recipes for children with diabetes are a great way to make eating both enjoyable and beneficial. As with any disease, though, it is vital that you find a healthcare provider you can trust.

CHAPTER 10:

How to Beat Back to School Anxiety

As summer fades into autumn, your child's schedule accelerates into high gear. Long and lazy sunny days dotted with spontaneous adventures are quickly replaced by early-morning walks to the bus stop and structured weekly schedules. The yearly transition from summer to school can bring its share of stress for children of any grade level.

Whether they are worried about moving into a new school or concerned about the impending academic challenges of a new grade, your child may begin to display certain symptoms of anxiety. Being mindful of these symptoms, and encouraging them to practice self-care can help to relieve their back-to-school worries. And, with the help of your family health center in Arkansas, you and your child can face the new academic year with ease.

Is Your Child Experiencing Anxiety?

In order to identify whether your child's stress teeters into significant anxiety, research the [mental health concern](#) to familiarize yourself with its characteristics. Understanding anxiety and its potential associated symptoms will provide an educated lens through which to observe your child's mental health. Take note of their behavior at various times during their day, and report your findings to your family health center in Arkansas. Are they significantly more irritable when discussing school? Do you find that they are more fatigued during the day due to lack of sleep? These are all beginning signs of anxiety.

Stop the Snowball

Before your child's anxiety surrounding their new schedule escalates, you should directly address their concerns about returning to school. At first, their responses may be defensive, due to their discomfort. When faced with stress, it is normal to willfully ignore it. Be mindful of your tone when responding, as mirroring theirs will only fuel their anxiety. Introduce self-care through possible activities that may make their transition more enjoyable. Having distractions from their current stress will help them keep their focus off of their back-to-school worries.

Self-Care

Self-care comes in all forms and is unique to the individual. Direct the conversation away from school-specific anxiety and towards activities your child likes doing, or would like to do more of during their week. Adding healthy, enjoyable activities to their schedule balances out negative stress surrounding their weighty obligations by giving them something to look forward to. To focus on mental health, find time to go for a walk or hike

with your child. The fresh air and bonding time will allow for emotional release. To boost their mood through social activities, encourage your child to get involved with team-based extracurriculars. Whether they opt for an athletic club or something more artistic, being a part of a team will provide both social and emotional benefits. Having a group to turn to at least once a week will support inclusivity and stability as they make their transition into a new school year.

Recruit Support Outside of the Home

There is no such thing as too much support, especially if you notice that your child's anxiety around returning to school extends past general stress. Although practicing self-care outside of their academic schedule is important for managing stress, the anxiety experienced during their school day can be enough to undermine their mental health benefits.

Knowledge is power, and [open communication with their teachers and administrators](#) is key to translating your child's concerns. Contact your child's school to set up a time, whether in person or over the phone, to let their new teachers know about your child's anxiety. Identify possible areas that may be triggering extensive stress, so as to help them be mindful of what to look out for during the school day. Opening this dialogue will prevent your child's anxiety from being misinterpreted as behavioral issues, and can prompt opportunity for additional accommodations.

CHAPTER 11

How to Have a Balanced Diet During Back-to-School Rush

Keep your child's eating habits healthy on school days. Know which nutrients your child needs, and how much they should eat per day.

Kids' nutritional needs are very similar to those of adults, in that they need things like protein, carbohydrates, fat, vitamins, and minerals. However, children need different amounts of specific nutrients as they grow.

Use the following nutritional guidelines to help ensure that you provide the perfect formula of nutrients to [protect your child's health](#), and help them feel strong and energetic as they grow, learn, and meet their daily challenges at school.

Dietary Guidelines for U.S. Americans recommends these basic [nutritional amounts for boys and girls](#) in various age groups.

High-Nutrient Foods

Children's diets should include:

Vegetables — A variety of fresh or frozen vegetables, including red, dark green, and orange vegetables, peas, and beans. Keep in mind that canned vegetables are higher in sodium.

Fruits — Fresh, frozen, or dried fruits instead of fruit juices, which are high in calories. Remember, dried fruits contain more calories.

Dairy — Fat-free or low-fat dairy foods and beverages, like milk, cheese, and yogurt.

Grains — Whole grains, including oatmeal, bread, popcorn, and wild or brown rice. Limit servings of refined grains like pasta or white bread.

Protein — Poultry, fish, seafood, lean red meat, eggs, peas, beans, and unsalted seeds and nuts.

Limit Your Child's Intake of These:

Refined Sugar:

Limit added sugar. Serve foods and drinks containing natural sugars, like fruit and milk, instead of those with refined sugar.

Saturated and Trans Fats:

Substitute fats from some red meat, dairy products, and poultry by serving nut or vegetable oils, which contain Vitamin E and essential fatty acids. Olives, avocados, and

seafood also [contain healthy fats](#). Avoid foods with partially hydrogenated oil to avoid trans fats.

Recommended Nutrition for Children

The following are general recommendations for children's daily nutrition.

Daily guidelines for girls ages 4 – 8

Total calorie intake of 1,200-1,800 (variable based on activity level and growth).

- **Protein** 3 – 5 ounces
- **Vegetables** 1.5 – 2.5 cups
- **Fruits** 1 – 1.5 cups
- **Dairy** 2.5 cups
- **Grains** 4 – 6 ounces

Daily guidelines for boys ages 4 – 8

Total calorie intake of 1,200-2,000, (variable based on activity level and growth).

- **Protein** 3 – 5.5 ounces
- **Vegetables** 1.5 – 2.5 cups
- **Fruits** 1 – 2 cups
- **Dairy** 2.5 cups
- **Grains** 4 – 6 ounces

Daily guidelines for girls ages 9 – 13

Total calorie intake of 1,400-2,200, (variable based on activity level and growth).

- **Protein** 4 – 6 ounces
- **Vegetables** 1.5 – 3 cups
- **Fruits** 1.5 – 2 cups
- **Dairy** 3 cups
- **Grains** 5 – 7 ounces

Daily guidelines for boys ages 9 – 13

Total calorie intake of 1,600-2,600 (variable based on activity level and growth).

- **Protein** 5 – 6.5 ounces
- **Vegetables** 2 – 3.5 cups
- **Fruits** 1.5 – 2 cups
- **Dairy** 3 cups
- **Grains** 5 – 9 ounces

Daily guidelines for girls ages 14 – 18

Total calorie intake of 1,800-2,400, (variable based on activity level and growth).

- **Protein** 5 – 6.5 ounces
- **Vegetables** 2.5 – 3 cups
- **Fruits** 1.5 – 2 cups
- **Dairy** 3 cups
- **Grains** 6 – 8 ounces

Daily guidelines for boys ages 14 – 18

Total calorie intake of 2,000-3,200, (variable based on activity level and growth).

- **Protein** 5.5 – 7 ounces
- **Vegetables** 2.5 – 4 cups
- **Fruits** 2 – 2.5 cups
- **Dairy** 3 cups
- **Grains** 6 – 10 ounces

CHAPTER 12

Essential Tips for Keeping Your Kids Active and Healthy

Getting regular physical activity is important for kids in order to stay healthy, especially when they are not in school. Find out how to make sure your kids get exercise on a daily basis this summer.

During the summer, kids typically have plenty of time to spend being active, since they are not dealing with homework and school activities. However, some kids fall into a routine of sitting around more than staying on their feet, which is not good for their health. With a few tips, you can help your kids form good exercise habits this summer that they can put to use all year long. Keep in mind that in addition to exercise, you should also make sure you find a primary care clinic near you so that your kids can get routine physicals and prompt care if they get sick or injured.

Focus on Fun

It really does not matter what kids are doing in terms of [physical activity](#), as long as they are active and on their feet. Rather than sitting for long periods of time they can boost

their health and happiness with the smallest of activities. Let your kids run around, use their imagination, and explore your yard or the local park, which provides them with plenty of exercise and fresh air. Making physical activity fun helps motivate kids to stay active compared to trying to enforce a certain workout routine or activity for exercise that they do not enjoy.

Plan for Rainy Days

Fresh air is good for kids, but the weather does not always cooperate. On days when it is rainy, stormy, or too hot to be outside, give your kids a way to stay active indoors. Put their favorite music on so they can dance around the house or let them play video games that require them to be up and active, such as fitness games. This helps ensure that your kids will still get exercise, even when they cannot go outdoors and run around.

Set a Good Example

Your kids learn by watching you, so set a good example for them. [Set aside time to exercise](#) each day, and encourage your kids to join you. You can do a family workout routine or take walk or bike rides together every day. This is a great way to motivate kids to build good exercise habits while also spending more time together as a family on a regular basis.

Plan Play Date Activities

When your kids have a playdate, plan backyard games or other activities for them to do instead of sitting inside playing. You can also make plans with other parents to bring the kids to a local pool or park for even more fun and exercise during play dates.

CHAPTER 13

Your Ultimate Sun Safety Guide for Summer

In her famous book, *The Summer I Turned Pretty*, Jenny Han wrote, “Everything good, everything magical happens between the months of June and August.” While summer is considered the best time of year for kids across the country, it is also the time of year when the sun can cause the most damage to your skin.

Children have sensitive skin, so if they get burned, the effects are particularly severe. You need to make sure they are covering themselves and wearing sunscreen whenever they are outside, even if it is just for a brief moment.

These summer sun safety suggestions can offer maximum protection, so that you and your family can enjoy yourselves all season long.

Wear Sunscreen

The best cure for sun damage is prevention, and the most effective way of preventing it is to wear sunscreen whenever you are outdoors. While many people take wearing sunscreen as a given, a recent study by the [American Academy of Dermatology](#) indicates that the majority of Americans are not using sunscreen properly. In this survey, only 32 percent of respondents knew that a sunscreen with an SPF 30 provided twice as much protection as a sunscreen with an SPF 15. And even though 85 percent of respondents knew you needed to reapply sunscreen after swimming, few did.

Apply sunscreen that has an SPF of more than 15, that is labeled “broad spectrum”, and is waterproof. Be sure to apply it to your ears, lips, nose, hands, and the top of your head. Then, reapply sunscreen every two hours, sooner if you are swimming or sweating.

Limit Exposure During Midday

The sun is at its [most potent between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.](#) Even on cloudy days, it is important to be vigilant about your sun exposure between these hours. The less you walk, drive, or exercise outdoors during that period of time, the lower the likelihood that any part of your body will be harmed by the sun. If possible, schedule outdoor activities outside of these strong sun hours. If not, set an alarm on your phone as a reminder to reapply sunscreen.

Cover with Clothing

As counter-intuitive as it sounds for summer weather, your body will stay cooler and your skin will be protected if you keep it covered with lightweight, loose-fitting clothing. Special sun-protective clothing is now available on the market that is rated with special fabric that has a Ultraviolet Protective Factor (UPF). These fabrics are designed to limit the effects of the sun's rays on the body while keeping you cool.

Check Yourself & Your Children Often

Most skin cancers can be easily treated [if they are detected early by your primary care provider](#). Keep an eye on any suspicious dark spots, moles, or skin imperfections. If you notice any change, contact your primary care provider immediately.

Additionally, regular physical exams will allow your primary care physician to see any worrisome places on your skin and detect changes to moles, freckles, or sun spots.

Whether in times of illness or good health, having a healthcare provider you can trust is an invaluable assurance.

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