

September 2023 Health Tip

HEALTHY HABITS FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

Dr. Matthew Brothers, MD, a pediatric cardiologist says, “outdoor activity is excellent for infants and toddlers, especially as restrictions related to COVID-19 ease. It is good for their physical and mental health and development. More outdoor time is linked with improved motor development and lower obesity rates.” Dr. Brothers encourages families to look for healthy ways to play outdoors with children.



THE BENEFITS OF BEING OUTSIDE

- Physically healthier. Children play harder outdoors than indoors.
- More engaged in learning. Playing outside promotes more curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking.
- More positive in behavior. Research has found that when children spent time in natural settings they had less anger and aggression. Impulse control also improves.
- Mentally healthier. Stress and depression are lower for all people who spend time in nature.

Dr. Mary Braithwaite, MD, MSPH, Pediatrician

Growing Healthy Bodies

Words of wisdom from **Dr. Mary Braithwaite, MD, Pediatrician**. “Obesity is a growing challenge in the United States, especially since the covid pandemic caused many families to spend time at home and away from activities that promote physical activity. As we transition to our new normal in this pandemic, we must prioritize healthy child growth, which includes their physical development (as well as mental health). For those who have elevated weight, it is important to focus on their **healthy** growth and reaching **behavior goals**, rather than focusing on weight loss.”



CHOOSE HEALTHY HABITS THAT CAN LAST A LIFETIME!

- Eat 5+ fruits and vegetables/day
- Limit screen time to no more than 2 hours/day (Televisions and other screens should not be in children's sleeping rooms)
- Get at least one hour or more of physical activity each day (consider school sports or age-appropriate physical activity that gets the heart rate up)
- Reduce/eliminate sugar-sweetened beverages
- Drink water
- Choose healthy eating behaviors (eg, 3 meals a day, limit eating out)
- Make eating together a WHOLE family event as much as possible.



For more information click on links below.

- www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org
- www.letsmove.gov
- www.kidshealth.org
- www.healthychildren.org
- September National Health Observances: Childhood Obesity, Food Safety and Education, Healthy Aging, and Recovery Awareness
- American Academy of Pediatrics www.healthychildren.org

Contact us

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