

NEWSLETTER

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KEEPING KIDS HEALTHY

I know we're bigger than viruses but these tiny things sure can make us sick. And every child will get sick at some time or other no matter what the parents do. But there are some things that wise parents do to keep illness in their children at a minimum.

Be sure your child's IMMUNIZATIONS are complete and up-to-date. You'd feel pretty awful if your child came down with a completely preventable disease like measles. Just the other day I heard about a near-fatal case of whooping cough in a baby. Why was this baby so sick? His mother "didn't believe in immunizations." If I were that mother I couldn't face myself in the mirror.

Keep your kids AWAY FROM OBVIOUSLY SICK PEOPLE, especially those who are coughing and sneezing. This advice cannot be perfectly effective because we can spread viruses the day before we know we have a cold. But every barrier parents can erect between the virus and their child helps. Children should not be allowed to play with kids who have an infectious rash or diarrhea. And your child's preschool should not allow sick children to come to class.

AVOID CROWDS!

I get a little uptight when I see a tiny baby at the mall. I know that it is counterproductive for children to be raised in antiseptic isolation. Kids need to be exposed to a little dirt and some people. But big crowds increase the chance that someone nearby will have a virus that little Susie is not immune to.

WASH THOSE HANDS!

Frequent and thorough hand washing helps keep down the spread of illness. How frequent? You and your children should wash your hands after coming into contact with a sick person, after you blow your nose, and frequently during the day. The old "Wash your hands before dinner!" is not enough. Wash your hands not only before meals but every time you use the bathroom and every time you come into the house. Use warm water and soap and keep washing until you have sung "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

NO SMOKING!

We now know that passive smoke can increase the frequency of respiratory infections in all children and cause wheezing in those prone to asthma.

So don't you or anybody else smoke in your house or car. Children also are affected by smoke from wood fires.

REST!

Many children today are overprogrammed. They never have time for quiet play because they go from school to sports to dance to karate. My mother always insisted that her children have a "quiet hour" before dinner. We all went to our beds and read books. Exercise is important, especially playing outdoors in the fresh air. But don't overlook the restorative power of a rest period. (It's good for busy parents too.)

EAT RIGHT!

No there's no magic nutrients that prevent colds but a good diet with lots of fruits and vegetables will provide your children with more vitamins than a diet of junk food.

HUGS AND KISSES!

Maybe it's witchcraft but if I am feeling really "up" I don't catch cold. When I'm stressed out I definitely seem more vulnerable to what's going around. Kids are susceptible to stress just like the rest of us. Lots of hugs and kisses and laughs together could make your child feel good. Give Vitamins H and K a try this winter!