

Primary Care Providers Keep Children Healthy and Take Care of Them when They Get Sick

Transition Skills, Tips & Tools
Tending to Your Child's Health Care



1. Like a car - your child's body needs regular check-ups. Well-Baby and Well-Child check-ups are important, even when your child feels fine.
2. The Academy of Pediatrics now recommends doing check-ups at the following times: several days of age (if early discharge), 2-4 weeks of age, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 2 years, 3 years, 4-5 years, 5-6 years and every other year thereafter.
3. Early treatment may help to keep health problems from becoming serious.
4. It is important that one health provider helps to take care of your child's basic health needs - not just a part of your child's body like many specialists do.
5. Primary care providers (PCP) help your child in many different ways:
 - They teach you how to keep your child healthy.
 - They oversee all of your child's care, including well-care and coordination of care and services.
 - They help monitor your child's growth and development. You can talk to the doctor about helping your child meet his/her developmental milestones.
 - They can help advise on how to handle behavioral issues.
 - They can share information and resources about parent groups and community services.
 - They help you to keep your child's vaccines up-to-date to prevent illnesses that can cause life-long problems, such as hearing loss, blindness, joint and muscle damage or brain damage.
 - They refer your child to specialty care when your child needs it.Help guide you on issues such as car seats, home safety, starting foods, speech development, etc.
6. Caring for your child when he/she is sick takes a lot of time - your life is much easier when you keep your child as healthy as possible.
7. Talk to your PCP about:
 - What works best for you and your child.
 - Ways to make the exam or treatment easier for your child by sharing his/her special interests, activities, and routines.
 - If your child is more at risk for infections, you might want to ask to wait in a special area.

8. Ask your PCP for a written care plan to help guide your child's care and coordinate with others.
9. Here are some ways to make things easier for you and your family:
 - Ask lots of questions - make sure you understand what your child needs and why certain medication, therapy, or equipment is being used.
 - Pay close attention to your child's treatments. Work with your health care providers so you can be trained and comfortable in doing your child's treatment.
 - Talk with your doctor about how to best fit your child's treatments into your family's daily routines.
 - Always let your health care providers know how your child is reacting to treatments - it may be time to change what is being done.
10. Remember, you know your child better than anyone - always know what is going on with your child and ask for help when you need it.
11. It Is Important to Know About the Medications Your Child Takes
 - Make sure you know the exact name of the medicine(s) your child takes.
 - Find out why your child has to take them and how they work in the body.
 - Give your child their medicine at the same time of day - It might be better if you think about giving the medicine every day at 2:00 p.m. instead of at naptime, since your child may nap at different times, especially on the weekends.
 - Ask the doctor if you have questions about the time to give your child his/her medicine.
 - Side effects can be bothersome and dangerous - make sure you know what to look for.
 - Don't give too much or too little medication - know how much to give and when you can give more.
 - Always let your providers know about ALL the medications that your child takes - including non-prescription medications.
 - If you have any questions, ask your health care providers or pharmacist.
 - If you cannot afford these medications ask your health providers for resources that can help pay for medications.

You may find the following resources helpful:

- The Center for Parent Information and Resources has many resources to help you. To learn more, go to: <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/disability-landing/> or call 1-973-642-8100.
- Get help from care coordination organizations like Division of Specialized Care for Children to get connected to helpful resources and supports.
- HelpGuide Tips on family caregiving: Caregiver Stress and Burnout - <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/caregiver-stress-and-burnout.htm> provides tips that may help you to lighten the load, avoid the symptoms of caregiver burnout, and find more balance in your life.

We're here to help.

To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children's programs and services, check out our website at: dscc.uic.edu

