

# Pediatric Care

## Keeping Your Child Healthy

With the start of a new school year underway, you are probably hearing a lot about keeping kids safe during the COVID-19 outbreak. But good health goes a lot further than pandemic protections. Kids need care and attention to develop, learn and thrive. With so much information out there for parents, it's important to know where to turn when making healthcare decisions for your child.

## Finding a Pediatrician

Finding the right pediatrician for your child is important. You should seek to find someone with whom you and your child are comfortable and a doctor you trust. Seeking recommendations from friends and neighbors is a good way to start your search for a pediatrician. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) features a [Find a Pediatrician](#) tool that allows parents to search for doctors in their area.

There is a lot to consider when selecting the right pediatrician. Many practices will offer free visits to allow you to meet the doctor and ask questions about their style of care. The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) recommends asking questions like:

- Whom can we call when the office is closed?
- Do the values of the pediatrician and the practice align with my family's values and preferences?
- Is the practice connected to a larger care network or hospital system should my child need specialty care?

## Making Vaccine Decisions

There is a lot of information, and misinformation, available about vaccinations and it can be hard to determine what sources to trust. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) urges parents to vaccinate their children on time to provide immunity to harmful diseases before exposure. Having a conversation with your trusted pediatrician or family physician will enable you to gather the facts from a reliable source and make a well-informed decision about your child's healthcare. When making an appointment, mention that you'd like to discuss vaccines so your doctor can make time for this essential conversation.

An unintended consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic is many children have fallen behind with their vaccine schedules. If you had to cancel or postpone a well-visit for your child over the past 5+ months, make sure to get in touch with your pediatrician's office to get that appointment rescheduled, especially if your child was due for any vaccines. With flu season right around the corner, now is also a good time to touch base with your pediatrician's office to also find out when flu shots will be available.

## Coming This Month:

### Supplemental Care

..... September 11<sup>th</sup>

### Pediatric Nutrition

..... September 18<sup>th</sup>

### Exercise for Kids

..... September 25<sup>th</sup>

## Quarterly Video:

### Self-Management for Chronic Diseases

..... December

## Wellness Webinar:

### Healthy Eating

[Register Here](#)

..... September 30<sup>th</sup>

For assistance on your health and wellness journey, contact [ConnectCare3](#) at [info@connectcare3.com](mailto:info@connectcare3.com) or by calling 877-223-2350.

ConnectCare3 is available to those on the health insurance plan. Talk to your benefit representative to see if your company is enrolled.



## Are Virtual Visits and Telehealth Safe for Kids?

COVID-19 is changing the way we access health care. Many people are turning to virtual appointments and telehealth instead of visiting their physicians' office. Doctors, including pediatricians, can communicate with patients via email, phone or video chat. While the AAP recommends children receive in-person care at their pediatrician's office, telehealth or virtual appointments can help when a face-to-face visit is not possible.

If you schedule a virtual appointment with your child's pediatrician, here are some tips to help your visit go smoothly:

- Remember that parents, doctors, and patients are all learning how to best use this technology and it might take some getting used to.
- Make a list of questions you want to ask ahead of time, and take notes on what the doctor says and does.
- Ensure you and your child are in a comfortable, quiet space, and stay with your child for the duration of the visit.
- Be prepared to participate. The doctor may ask you to feel a bump or describe symptoms in further detail

While virtual visits can be convenient, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, it's important to know when you need to call your pediatrician. If your child has urgent symptoms such as a high fever or a new onset of pain, call your pediatrician first to determine the most appropriate action plan. Find out if your physician can complete a thorough assessment via telemedicine or if an in-person visit is required. If the situation is serious or after-hours, seek help at the nearest emergency room.



## Building Blocks for a Healthy Life

Every parent wants healthy, happy children. Establishing good habits at an early age can help maintain a healthy lifestyle. The AAP places special emphasis on nutrition. Kids need to eat a balanced diet with plenty of vitamins and nutrients. Try cooking healthy meals with your children or eating together as a family to instill healthy eating habits. If you're looking for information and support in creating these healthier nutrition habits for you and your family, and are on the health plan, consider working with a Registered Dietitian from ConnectCare3.

Children of all ages must have time for physical activity every day. The AAP recommends at least:

- 30 minutes of interactive play, such as "tummy time" for infants per day
- 3 hours of physical activity each day for kids ages 3-5
- 1 hour of physical activity most days of the week for children over 5

Keeping kids active can encourage lifelong exercise habits and improve sleep, which is just as important to development as eating well and exercising. Establishing healthy habits for your children also means teaching them to take care of their emotional wellness. Learning to process stress and express emotions are important for a child's emotional and mental health. If you have questions, talk to your pediatrician.