



As the air turns cool and crisp, we prepare once again for the onset of cold and flu season. We want to give you reliable information to help keep your children comfortable and safe as they battle the inevitable winter viruses. We also offer a bit of information on the risks of abusing marijuana, which continues to be a popular recreational drug amongst our teens. Finally, we continue to offer information on keeping your child's diet healthful, with a focus on snacks in this issue.



## FEVER

Fevers can be scary for parents. When your baby is burning up, it can be hard to think straight and make important decisions. Learning what causes fevers and how to treat them will ease your anxiety and help you take control of the situation.

Your child's normal temperature will vary with his age, activity, and the time of day. Infants tend to have higher temperatures than older children, and everyone's temperature is highest between late afternoon

and early evening and lowest between midnight and early morning. Ordinarily, a rectal reading of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) or less, or an oral reading of 99 degrees Fahrenheit (37.2 degrees Celsius) or less, is considered normal, while higher readings indicate fever.

Whenever you think your child has a fever, take his temperature with a thermometer. Feeling the skin (or using temperature sensitive tape) is not accurate, especially when the child is experiencing a chill. Rectal temperature is most accurate for a baby.

By itself, fever is not an illness. Rather, it is a sign or symptom of sickness. In fact, usually it is a positive sign that the body is fighting infection. Fever

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# Natural Cold & Flu REMEDIES

It's no wonder natural cold and flu remedies are popular--modern medicine has yet to offer a cure for these age-old ailments. Many natural remedies provide temporary relief, and a few may actually help you get better. See which cold and flu remedies show the most promise.

**VITAMIN C:** The cold-fighting prowess of vitamin C remains uncertain. Some studies suggest it can help reduce the duration of cold symptoms by about a day. In one study, participants who were exposed to extreme physical stress and cold weather and who took vitamin C were 50% less likely to get a cold.

**CHICKEN SOUP:** Grandma was onto something. Chicken soup may help cold symptoms in more than one way. Inhaling the steam can ease nasal congestion. Sipping spoonfuls of fluid can help avoid dehydration. And some advocates say the soup may soothe inflammation. Researchers have found chicken soup has anti-inflammatory properties in the lab, though it's unclear whether this effect translates to real-world colds.

**HOT TEA:** Drinking hot tea offers some of the same benefits as chicken soup. Inhaling the steam relieves congestion, while swallowing the fluid soothes the throat and keeps you hydrated. Black and green teas have the added bonus of being loaded with disease-fighting antioxidants, which may fight colds.

**GARLIC:** has long been touted for legendary germ-fighting abilities. One study showed garlic supplements may help prevent colds when taken daily. However, more research is needed to determine garlic's real effects. But garlic is very nutritious. In addition, it can help spice up your meals when a stuffy nose makes everything taste bland.

**STEAM/HUMIDIFIER:** For a heavy dose of steam, use a room humidifier -- or simply sit in the bathroom with the door shut and a hot shower running. Breathing in steam can break up congestion in the nasal passages, offering relief from a stuffy

or runny nose.

**SALINE DROPS:** Dripping or spraying saltwater into the nose can thin out nasal secretions and help remove excess mucus, while reducing congestion. Try over-the-counter saline drops, or make your own by mixing 8 ounces of warm water with 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon baking soda. Use a bulb syringe to squirt the mixture into one nostril while holding the other one closed. Repeat 2-3 times and then do the other side.

**NETI POT:** You can use the same DIY saline solution in a neti pot. This small ceramic pot is used to flush out the nasal passages with a saltwater solution -- a process known as nasal irrigation. The result is thinner mucus that drains more easily. Research suggests neti pots are useful in relieving sinus symptoms, such as congestion, pressure, and facial pain, particularly in patients with chronic sinus troubles.

**MENTHOL OINTMENT:** Days of wiping and blowing your nose can leave the skin around your nostrils sore and irritated. A simple remedy is to dab a menthol-infused ointment under, but not in, the nose or on the chest or throat. Menthol has mild numbing agents that can relieve the pain of raw skin. As an added benefit, breathing in the medicated vapors that contain menthol or camphor may help relieve cough or open clogged passages and ease symptoms of congestion. Use only in children over 2 years of age.

**SALTWATER:** Gargle For a sore throat, the traditional saltwater gargle may have some merit. Gargling warm water with a teaspoon of salt four times daily may help keep a scratchy throat moist.

**BED REST:** With our busy lives, most of us loathe to spend a day or two under the covers. But getting plenty of rest lets your body direct more energy to fighting off germs. Staying warm is also important, so tuck yourself in and give your immune cells a leg up in their noble battle.

Source: WebMD

► Continued from the front page: **FEVER**

stimulates certain defenses, such as the white blood cells, which attack and destroy invading bacteria. The fever may actually be important in helping your child fight his infection. However, fever can make your child uncomfortable. It increases his need for fluids and makes his heart rate and breathing rate faster.

## MANAGING THE FEVER

Although not every fever needs to be treated, there are some things you can do to help make your child more comfortable if he or she is not feeling well. Giving a child acetaminophen or ibuprofen will usually reduce a fever.

Common sense is equally important for treating fevers. Don't overdress the child, no matter what grandma says. The same goes for giving baby an alcohol bath, an old practice that is no longer recommended.

A fever will also cause a child to lose fluids more quickly, so offer your baby plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.

## WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

A fever itself doesn't necessarily warrant a call or trip to the doctor. It depends on the age of the child and his other symptoms. How the child looks and how they are acting is more important, especially if they seem fine once the fever is reduced.

When to call:

- Your child is younger than 4 months old and has a fever. If your child is younger than 2 months old, you must call the doctor immediately, no matter what time day or night.
- Your child is lethargic, unresponsive, refuses to eat, has a rash, or is having difficulty breathing.
- You observe signs of dehydration, such as a dry mouth, a sunken soft spot, or significantly fewer wet diapers.
- Your child's fever lasts more than a few days.

Source: *Healthy Children Magazine*, Winter 2008. *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5* (Copyright © 2009 American Academy of Pediatrics)



# MARIJUANA

Many people today learn about drugs while they are very young and might be tempted to try them. Teens say that marijuana is easy to get, and it tends to be the first illegal drug they try. Marijuana use is often portrayed as harmless, but the truth is that marijuana is an addictive drug that can cause serious risks and consequences.

## MARIJUANA USE AFFECTS HEALTH

### SCHOOL

Marijuana users have a hard time thinking clearly, concentrating, remembering things, and solving problems. Frequent marijuana use often causes grades to drop. Users often lose interest in school and may quit.

### DRIVING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Marijuana impairs judgment, complex motor skills, and the ability to judge speed and time. Those who drive or take other risks after smoking marijuana are much more likely to be injured or killed.

### LONG-TERM HEALTH

Teens' bodies and brains are still growing and maturing, so marijuana use at this age can lead to a wide range of serious health problems, including heart and lung damage, cancer, mental health problems, and addiction. Depression, anxiety, and schizophrenia occur more often in marijuana users.

## MARIJUANA IS AN ADDICTIVE DRUG

Children who smoke marijuana can lose control over their use and become addicted. Many people overlook marijuana addiction because its withdrawal symptoms are not prominent or may not be present at all. However, withdrawal is only one symptom of addiction.

Teens who are addicted to marijuana likely smoke several times a week or more. Although most believe they are in control and can quit at any time, most can't. Those using marijuana heavily often perform poorly in school or sports, lose interest in hobbies, and develop interpersonal problems with family and friends. As with alcohol, the younger a person is when starting marijuana use, the more likely she will become addicted.

Take these steps to help prevent your child from becoming interested in using marijuana or other drugs.

- ✔ Set high expectations and clear limits. Instill strong values. Let your child know that you expect her not to use drugs. Teach her healthy values that are important to your family and to use these values when deciding what is right and wrong.
- ✔ Talk with your child about the dangers of drug use, including marijuana. Young people who do not know the facts may try drugs just to see what they are like. Start talking with your child at an early age about the dangers of drug use. Encourage him to ask questions and tell you about his concerns. Be sure to really listen. Do not lecture or do all the talking. Ask what he thinks about drug use and its risks.
- ✔ Use teachable moments. Discuss car accidents and other tragedies that are caused by drug use and are in the news or your child's life.
- ✔ Help your child handle peer pressure. Peers and others can strongly influence young people to try drugs. As a parent, your influence can be even stronger in helping your child learn to be confident, make healthy choices, and resist unhealthy peer pressure. Tell her that it is OK to say "No!" to risky behaviors and mean what she says. Help her find and spend time enjoying positive interests that build self-esteem.
- ✔ Help your child deal with emotions. Especially during the teen years, many young people face strong emotions for the first time. Teens sometimes get depressed or anxious and might consider drug use to try to escape these feelings and forget problems. Explain that everyone has these feelings at times, so it is important for each person to learn how to express his feelings, cope with them, and face stressors in healthy ways that can help prevent or resolve problems.
- ✔ Set a good example. Avoid using tobacco and illicit drugs. Minimize alcohol use, and always avoid drinking and driving. Be a good role model in the ways you express, control, and relieve stress, pain, or tension. Actions do speak louder than words!

Source *Marijuana: What You Need to Know* (Copyright © 2010 American Academy of Pediatrics)

# Healthy Snacking

Snacks are a part of a child's daily menu and should be used to help kids meet their nutritional needs. Parents need to teach children to make healthy choices for snacks and meals at home and school. This can help prevent children from becoming overweight.

Teach children to pay attention to how much sodium, fat and sugar are in their snacks. Look for snacks with less than 200 milligrams of sodium, less than 200 calories and that have little or no fat and sugar. Snacks should include at least two food groups. For example, pair apple slices with cheese or a mini bagel with peanut butter.

## Snack Ideas from Each Food Group

<b>GRAINS</b>	dry cereal, whole grain crackers, rice cakes, sliced bread, mini bagels, graham crackers, whole wheat tortillas
<b>VEGETABLES</b>	veggie "matchsticks" made from fresh carrots or zucchini, bell pepper rings, cherry tomatoes, green beans, sugar peas, avocados
<b>FRUITS</b>	apple slices, tangerine sections, strawberry halves, bananas, pineapple, kiwi, peach, mango, nectarine, melon, grapes, berries, dried apricots
<b>DAIRY</b>	low-fat cheese slices or string cheese, 8oz yogurt cups with no more than 30 gm of sugar, fat-free or low-fat milk, low-fat cottage cheese
<b>PROTEIN FOODS</b>	egg slices or wedges, peanut butter, bean dip, hummus, slices of lean turkey, shelled pumpkin seeds

## Some ways to combine these foods:

- ✓ Yogurt topped with diced peaches or berries
- ✓ Whole grain bread spread with peanut butter and sliced bananas
- ✓ Graham crackers to dip in yogurt
- ✓ A small portion of last night's leftovers (make sure leftovers are safe to eat)
- ✓ Smoothie with fruit and yogurt- one good example on right hand side:



## Recipe: Green Vegetable Smoothie

This light, refreshing smoothie packs in nearly 3 cups of produce, including a generous amount of nutrient-rich spinach. Most commercial juice drinks are primarily carbs, but this one has creamy Greek yogurt for a hefty dose of protein.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup baby spinach
- 1/2 cup cucumber chunks, peel on
- 1 stalk celery, cut into chunks
- 1/2 medium banana, cut into chunks
- 1/2 cup pineapple chunks, fresh or frozen
- 6-ounce container nonfat plain Greek yogurt (see note)
- 3 - 5 ice cubes (optional)

### PREPARATION (Serving size: 2 cups):

Add the spinach, cucumber, celery, and 1/2 cup water to the blender. Blend on high until completely smooth and liquid. Add the banana, pineapple, yogurt, and ice cubes (if using) to the blender. Blend until smooth and frothy.