



In this issue:

- Childhood Fitness
- How to Increase a Child's Physical Activity
- Healthy Snacks for Kids
- Calming Herbs : Lavender and Chamomile
- Get Your Kids To Sleep
- Recipe: Chicken Salad Cups

t



www.cms.k12.nc.us

Childhood Fitness

Last issue, we told you about all the exciting outdoor opportunities embedded in Hamilton's landscape. The importance of engaging children in physical activity and teaching them to enjoy an active lifestyle cannot be understated. Summer is a perfect time to take advantage of the inviting outdoor weather, and encourage everyone in the family to get some healthy exercise. Being active has many benefits for children, from toddlers to teenagers; it can promote proper growth and development, help regulate sleeping patterns, and create feel-good endorphins. Another important benefit of physical activity is that it can contribute to the maintenance of a healthy body weight for your child. Many members of the current generation of children are struggling with weight issues, thus increased physical activity combined with a healthy diet can help prevent complications of obesity in adulthood. (American Heart Association, <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4670>)

5 Tips to Increase Your Child's Physical Activity

Be a role model – Children learn very quickly through observation. If you show them how important it is to you to take care of yourself – by exercising and eating healthy – they will be much more likely to be interested in your encouragement and follow suit. Taking them for a walk with you or even letting them watch you do light aerobic exercises is enough to stimulate conscious awareness.

Be Consistent and Firm About Routines – It is important to emphasize regularity in exercise and well as healthy eating habits. In combination, the upkeep of these good habits developed in childhood can help prevent cardiovascular and weight-associated complications in adulthood.

Individualize Their Exercise – For some children, the competition of group sports may make them resist involvement. Individual accomplishments can be experienced through activities like dancing, yoga, bike riding or rollerblading. More strenuous activity can be gradually approached, starting with a daily walking routine to produce rewarding results.

Control Downtime – Setting limits on the amount of time a child spends on sedentary activities can lead to more extra time for physical activities. Calmer activities should be saved for the evening, and can provide valuable wind-down time before bed.

Pick Trendy Activities – selecting activities that are popular with children can facilitate willing involvement. Step classes, dance classes (such as hip hop), kickboxing and karate are all activities that a parent and child can enjoy together... without any 'social trauma' on the child's part.

Adapted from Parade Magazine, Sept 2005
http://www.parade.com/articles/editions/2005/edition_09-25-2005/featured_2

Lavender

Lavendula angustifolia is native to Europe, commonly found growing on garden pathways and in aromatic sachets among the pillows in a bed and breakfast. It is frequently used to promote a relaxing sleep, relieve headaches and makes a gentle insect repellent.

Research has suggested that lavender can have an impact on brain wave activity, resulting in sedative and relaxing effects. The part of this plant possessing medicinal properties is the oil, extracted through steam distillation. Adding a few drops of Lavender essential oil or a handful of Lavender flowers to bathwater before bedtime is soothing for any member of your family.

Chamomile

Matricaria chamomilla is commonly known as Chamomile. This gentle herb is known for its mild sedative effects. Traditionally, chamomile has been used to soothe gastrointestinal discomforts such as gas, relieve irritability related to teething in children, and can calm nervous tension and aid sleep. Animal studies have demonstrated a depressive effect on the central nervous system, which accounts for Chamomile's sedative effects.



<http://www.vitamins-nutrition-good-health-info.com>

As a mild herb, *Matricaria* can be used safely in pregnant and nursing women and children. It should however be used with caution in individuals allergic to ragweed. The most effective forms of this herb are infusions (tea) made from dry flower petals and tincture forms.



Chicken-Salad Cups



http://images.jupiterimages.com/common/del/25/41/23084125.jpg

- ¼ cup low-fat mayonnaise
 - 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
 - ½ tsp. honey
 - ¼ cup finely minced onions
 - Pinch of salt and pepper
 - 1 cup cooked diced chicken breast or 1 can drained tuna
 - ¼ cup grated carrots
 - ¼ cup finely chopped celery
 - 4 medium size ripe tomatoes
 - Whole-grain crackers, optional
- In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise, mustard, sugar, minced onion, salt and pepper. In a medium bowl, combine chicken (or tuna), carrots, and celery. Stir in mayonnaise dressing.
- Cut off tops of tomatoes and save. Scoop out seeds and pulp. Fill with chicken (or tuna) salad and place tomato tops on as lids. Serve with crackers, if desired. Makes 4 servings.

It is important to give your children snacks throughout the day to keep their energy levels up. When they are being active, the best thing to offer them is a nutritious, high protein, homemade snack that will give them the liveliness they need. Steering away from store bought processed snacks, or at least choosing the right store bought snacks, can help introduce routine nutrition into a child's busy schedule.

Healthy Snacks for Kids

“Ice Cream” - Peel a number of very ripe bananas. Break into one-inch pieces and freeze in a closed plastic bag until very hard. Just before serving, run through a juicer, or blend in blender with a small amount of liquid (water or juice). Serve immediately. Add carob powder or berries to blender for different flavors or top with fruit and nuts.

“Turkey tortilla” - Place low sodium deli turkey, low-fat mozzarella and lettuce on a whole-wheat tortilla. Roll tightly, seal, and refrigerate. Cut into one-inch slices.

“Ants on a Log..(a sure hit!)” - Spread almond or peanut butter into celery sticks. Dot with raisins (the ants).

“Parfait” – layer cut fresh fruits and low-fat cottage cheese in a clear cup.

“Yogurt Treat” – mix dried cranberries and low fat granola in with some low-fat vanilla yogurt for a quick snack.

“Eccentric Oatmeal” – Mix a tablespoon of peanut or almond butter and a tablespoon of dried raisins into a bowl of oatmeal for flavour.

“Veggies and Dip” – Substitute store bought dips for hummus (preferably home made), served with thinly sliced vegetables.

“Candy” (special occasions) -
 1 cup natural almond butter or peanut butter
 1/2 cup carob powder
 1/2 cup mashed banana
 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract

Mix together, shape into balls, and roll in cinnamon. If desired, press a walnut half on top. Store in the refrigerator. Variation: Mix peanut and almond butter and granola and refrigerate.

“Healthy Recipe Substitutions”

Use these substitutions to make your favourite recipes healthier and allergy-free.

Sugar - 1/2 cup honey (or less) for 1 cup sugar. Decrease oil by 1/2 when using honey.

Shortening - Use 1/2 oil and 1/2 butter.
White Flour - Use same amount of whole wheat flour.

Wheat Flour - Use 7/8 cup brown rice flour or 1 cup spelt flour for 1 cup wheat flour.

Tips to Help Your Child – And You – Get More Sleep

Too energized to snooze

Resist stimulating activities before bedtime like TV watching or tickling, and substituting them with calming massages, bedtime stories or lullabies to help calm your child enough to drift off.

Sensitive to surroundings

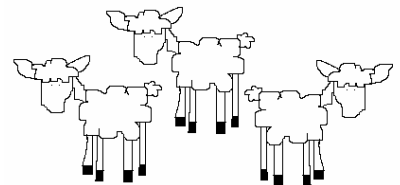
Silent environments at night may make your child focus on small distractions, like the phone ringing, a clothing label rubbing against their skin, or even food digesting in their bodies. If it is silence or specific noises that bother your child, consider a white noise CD that can create a calming background distraction while blocking out household commotion. Also check their neck and ears for overheating if they wake in the night, and undress accordingly.

Light Deprivation

If a child doesn't see enough light during the day, the schedule of their melatonin production may be thrown off. Providing bright light in the morning and throughout the day suppresses melatonin production until night time. Go for a walk outside or turn on a few lamps in the morning; but dim lights a few hours before bedtime. This will help your child associate darkness with sleep.

Late Night Snacking

Feeding a child right before bed time can produce an association between sleeping and eating. This can become an inconvenience when a child wakes up in the night and needs to feed before they can drift off again. Moving a child's feeding time to a few hours earlier in the night, and feeding in a different room than the nursery, can help prevent this association.



Naturopathic Perspectives

Dr. Caralei Peters, ND

Dr. Laura Grant, ND

To book an appt, contact:

202-10 George Street

Hamilton, ON L8P 1C8

Tel: 905.528.1661

Fax: 905.528.1991