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# The Wellness Connection

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## Back to School Tips for Parents

The beginning of a new school year can be a stressful time for children, with new teachers and classmates, bigger classrooms, new routines and more schoolwork. This time can be particularly unnerving and overwhelming for children who are facing major transitions such as starting elementary school or entering middle school. As a parent there are proactive steps you can take to support your child as he or she heads back to school.



If not, take a walk around the school with your child and locate his or her classrooms, lunchroom, playground and restrooms. This will help keep your child from feeling lost on the first day. Take time to listen to your child and discuss aspects of the new school that he or she is worried about. Remember to let your child know that it's normal to feel nervous about the start of school. For parents of younger children, suggest that your child take a family photo or special object to school to make his or her surroundings more comfortable.

physically, but socially and emotionally, as well. If you are aware of what's typical behavior and thoughts for your child's stage of life, you will more readily be able to tell when things may not be right.

Anxiety and stress about starting school is normal for a child and usually passes within the first few days or weeks. If your child continues to seem anxious or stressed, it may be time to seek help. Talk to your child's teacher and/or family physician about what you can do as a parent. If problems persist, consider a referral to a trained and qualified mental health professional. what you can do as a parent. If problems persist, consider a referral to a trained and qualified mental health professional.

\*Be interested and enthusiastic about the start of the school year. If you are confident and excited, your child will be too.

\*If you have visited your child's school already, you are one step

\*Spend time each day talking to your child about what happened in school. Give your child posi-

**When packing your child's lunch make sure to add healthy snacks, such as fruit cups, pretzels, cheese sticks, low-fat yogurt and butter-free popcorn. Encourage them not to drink sodas and instead encourage water and non-fat milk.**



**Just by adding certain foods to your diet you can help lower your cholesterol significantly. Oatmeal, oat bran, walnuts, almonds, fish, and Olive Oil are just a few of the healthy and delicious choices that will help keep your cholesterol numbers low.**



## National Cholesterol Education Month

September is National Cholesterol Education Month. Now is a good time to get your blood cholesterol checked and take steps to lower it if it is high. National Cholesterol Education Month is also a good time to learn about lipid profiles and about food and lifestyle choices that help you reach personal cholesterol goals.

The higher your cholesterol level, the greater the risk to your health. You can have high cholesterol and not know it. Lowering cholesterol levels lessens your risk for developing heart disease and reduces the chance of having a heart attack or dying of heart disease. The best way to do this is by making lifestyle changes. You may need to change your diet, be more physically active,

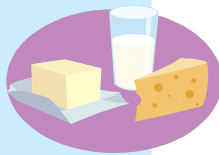
and manage your weight. Sometimes, drug treatment also is needed to lower blood cholesterol enough to be at healthy level. Make sure to have your cholesterol tested this month and make a plan with your doctor on the best course of action to lower your numbers and be healthier!



People who have high levels of Folic acid experience fewer allergies and have a lower likelihood of asthma. Folic acid may help you regulate your immune systems reaction to allergens. Try eating Folic rich foods like whole-grain breads and legumes or try taking a supplement if you suffer from allergy symptoms.



School age children and teens (age 9-18 years) require about 1300 mg of calcium each day. Busy kids may skip meals or grab what is on hand for a quick meal or snack. But, with your help they can still keep calcium in mind for meals and snacks on-the-go. Introduce kids to foods containing calcium that they can eat on the run. Keep portable, calcium-rich foods on hand for easy on-the-go snacks. Examples are low-fat or no fat string cheese or pudding. A handful of Almonds or even a cereal bar with calcium added.



## On Course to a Healthier You

Did you know you are more likely to reach your health goals when you stay focused on positive returns? It's easier to keep moving in a healthy direction when you are looking forward to a reward. It could be added energy for activities you enjoy, feeling and looking better, or a renewed sense of well being.

Here are a few ways to help you stay on course to a Healthier you! :

Select one goal area, such as exercise, to focus on.

Write down your expectations and three realistic actions you can start today.

Post your expectations and plan of action where you can see them every-day. Try your refrigerator or desktop.



Start Small. Major changes made overnight can be hard to maintain. Take it one step and one day at a time.

Reward yourself. For every goal you reach . For small

goals try rewarding yourself with a compliment. For the bigger goals you reach you might reward yourself with a new workout DVD or maybe a new pedometer.

No matter what be proud of yourself for any goal you attain on the course to being a healthier you!



## Laughter is the Best Medicine

If you want to stay healthy without doing hard exercises or spending a lot of money on medicine, laughing may be the best workout for you.

Laughing can give you many of the same benefits as aerobic exercise. It is a work out for diaphragm, abdominal, respiratory, facial, shoulders, back muscles and even legs. It also makes digestion and the absorption system function better. According to some

studies, laughter can burn calories equal to walking or biking.

Laughter is a natural antibody, or in other words, medicine.

The same as smiling which can increase endorphin hormone, so as laughing can strengthen the immune system and increase natural killer cell levels that prevent the growth of cancer cells.

Laughing also makes a person's body more relaxed and there-

after reduces problems related to high blood pressure, heart attack or stroke, depression, anxiety, stress, arthritis, and ulcers.

Most of the time, laughing is also an exercise for the heart and lungs. It can increase the amount of oxygen getting through our body. Thus, laughter is believed to stimulate both sides of brain and enhance the brain function related to retaining information and solving problem.



## Avoiding Sports Injuries

Back to school time also means fall sports have started for many of your kids. Playing sports is fun. Getting hurt isn't. Here are a few ways to help prevent your kids from being injured while playing their favorite sport.

**Make sure they wear protective gear.** They should always have on helmets and protective pads.

**Have them warm up and cool down.** Warm-ups should last between 15 and 30 minutes. The same with cooling down. They need to do this before and after every game and practice.

**Teach them the rules of the game.** When players know the rules of the game, what's legal and what's not, fewer injuries happen

**Make sure they are not playing while they are injured.** If you they love sports they will want to get right back in the game, even after an injury. But playing when they are hurt , or before an injury has had a chance to fully heal , is a bad idea. It can lead to an even worse injury, one that might sideline them for a long time