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Well Child Care at 5 Years

Revised November 2012

Nutrition Your child may enjoy helping to choose and prepare the family meals with supervision. Children watch what their parents eat, so set a good example. This will help teach him good food habits. Mealtime should be a pleasant time for the family. Avoid snack foods.

The USDA, the agency in charge of nutrition, has switched from the food pyramid to a new symbol: a colorful plate – called MyPlate – with some of the same messages:

Eat a variety of foods.

Eat less of some foods and more of others.

Limit liquids to water and non-fat milk.

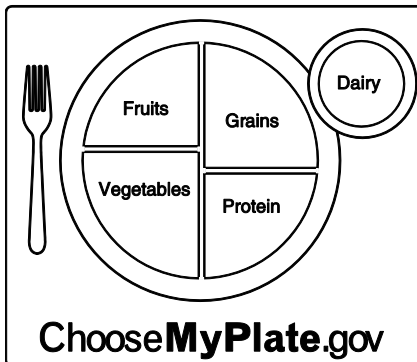
The plate is the size of a salad plate and features four sections (vegetable, fruits, grains, and protein) plus a side order of dairy. The big message is that fruits and vegetables take up half the plate, with the vegetable portion being a little bigger than the fruit section. In addition, the plate has been divided so that the grain section is bigger than the protein section. Why? Because nutrition experts recommend you eat more vegetables than fruit and more grains than protein foods.

What are Proteins, Grains and Dairy? You know what fruits and vegetables are, but here's a reminder about what's included in the three other food groups: proteins, grains, and dairy:

Protein: Beef; poultry; fish; eggs; nuts and seeds; and beans and peas like black beans, split peas, lentils, and even tofu and veggie burgers. Protein builds up, maintains, and replaces the tissue in your body.

Grains: Bread, cereal, rice, tortillas, and pasta. Whole-grain products such as whole-wheat bread, oatmeal, and brown rice are recommended because they have more fiber and help you feel full.

Dairy: Milk, yogurt, cheese, and fortified soy milk. With MyPlate, the dairy circle could be a cup of milk, but you also can get your dairy servings from yogurt or cheese. Choose low-fat yogurt and cheese and non-fat or 1% milk most of the time. Over a 24 hour period, your child should be taking in 8 to 12 ounces of dairy. The plate can be used for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. That may make you wonder: Do I really have to eat vegetables with breakfast? The answer is no, but aim to eat a variety of food groups at each meal. And if your breakfast doesn't include a veggie, consider a vegetable at snack time. Healthy, portion-controlled snacks are still OK.



Eating more fruits and vegetables will help you eat fewer calories overall, which helps you keep a healthy weight.

Eating fruits and veggies also gives you lots of vitamins and minerals.

7 Changes for Healthier Living

- 1. Drink Water.** Children who tolerate milk should drink between 8-16 oz. per day; teens, who need more calcium for their rapidly growing bones, should drink 16-24 oz. Toddlers between 1 and 2 years need whole milk; children between 2 and 6 years should drink reduced fat or non-fat milk; adults and children over age 6 should drink skim milk. Other than the amount listed, children should drink water – they do not need juice, sports drinks (unless they're engaging in strenuous activity in hot weather for more than an hour) or soda.
- 2. Turn off television.** Remove televisions, computers and video games from children's bedrooms. Limit leisure time in front of a screen (TV, videos, video games, computer) to ½ to 1 hour per day.
- 3. Increase daily activity** At least five days a week, children should participate in some vigorous activity which raises their heart rate for at least one half hour (sports, biking, running, dancing, exercise videos, etc.) Avoid the use of strollers.
- 4. Make physical activity a part of family life.** Exercise with your children. Play ball, do an exercise video, or take a walk after dinner. Each weekend schedule at least one family activity which involves being physically active. Play Frisbee or badminton, take a bike ride, walk around Balboa Park, go for a hike, etc.
- 5. Eat dinner as a family.** Turn off the TV, set the table and sit down together for half an hour at the end of the day. Once children are old enough to be eating finger foods (if not before), they should be included in the family dinner.

6. **Eat healthy foods for snacks.** Children should have for snacks only foods that you would be comfortable feeding them at mealtimes. Fruits and vegetables make the best snacks for older children. Younger children should also have some protein and a little bit of fat in their snacks. Diced chicken, tofu, or an ounce of cheese is a good addition.
7. **Check food labels for appropriate serving size (and remember that those are adult servings)** For smaller people, one serving is generally about the size of the child's closed fist. Also read food labels for the percentage of calories derived from fat. Avoid trans fats, and limit children two or older to foods that derive 30% or fewer of their calories from fat.

Development and Discipline Children at this age are imaginative, get along well with friends their own age, and have lots of energy. Be sure to praise children lavishly when they share things with each other. It is important to set rules about television watching. Limit total TV time for the whole family to at most 1 hour per day. Children should not be allowed to watch shows with violence or sexual behaviors. Watch TV with your child and discuss the shows. Find other activities other than watching TV that you can do with your child. Reading, hobbies, and physical activities are good alternatives to TV.

Some children still wet the bed at night. If your child wets the bed regularly, ask your doctor about ways to help your child. Five-year-olds usually are able to dress and undress themselves, understand rules in a game, and brush their own teeth. For behaviors you would like to encourage in your child, try to catch your child being good. That is, tell your child how proud you are when he does things that help you or others. Punishment for dangerous or hurtful behaviors is necessary. A child should also learn to apologize. Sending a child to a quiet, boring corner without anything to do for 5 minutes should follow.

Safety Tips Accidents are the number-one cause of deaths in children.

Car Safety

- Everyone in a car must always wear seat belts or be in an appropriate booster seat or car seat.
- Don't buy motorized vehicles for your child.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

- Always supervise street crossing. Your child may start to look in both directions but don't depend on her ability to cross a street alone.
- All family members should use a bicycle helmet.
- Do not allow your child to ride a bicycle near traffic.
- Don't buy a bicycle that is too big for your child.

Prevent Fires and Burns

- Practice a fire escape plan.
- Check smoke detectors and replace the batteries when necessary.
- Keep a fire extinguisher in or near the kitchen.
- Teach your child to never play with matches or lighters.
- Teach your child emergency phone numbers and to leave the house if fire breaks out.
- Turn your water heater down to 120°F (50°C).

Prevent Drowning

- Continuously watch your child around swimming pools.
- Enroll your child in swimming lessons.
- Learn CPR

Avoid Falls

- Never allow your child to climb on chairs, ladders, or cabinets.
- Do not allow your child to play on stairways.
- Make sure windows are closed and have protective locks

Safety Around Strangers and in Case she gets Lost

- Safety outside the home is very important to discuss with your child.
- Teach your child her address and phone number and how to contact you at work.
- Teach your child never to go anywhere with a stranger.

Poisons

- Teach your child to take medicines only with supervision.
- Teach your child to never eat unknown pills or substances.
- Put the poison center number on all phones: 1-800-222-1222

Dental Care

- Brushing teeth regularly after meals is important. Think up a game and make brushing fun.
- Make an appointment for your child to see the dentist.

Immunizations

Your child may receive one or more shots. After a shot your child may run a fever and become irritable for about 1 day. Your child may also have some soreness, redness, and swelling where a shot was given. For fever, give your child a dose of acetaminophen (240 mg = three 80-mg chewable tablets). For swelling or soreness, put a wet, warm washcloth on the area of the shot as often and as long as needed for comfort.

Call your child's physician immediately if:

- Your child has a fever over 105°F (40.5°C).
- Your child has a severe allergic reaction such as difficulty breathing, facial swelling, abdominal pain, or vomiting after getting the shot.
- Your child has any other unusual reaction.

Talking to Your Young Child about Sex

As a parent you know it's coming – that dreaded moment when your adorable, innocent little boy or girl suddenly glances up and asks, "Where do babies come from?"

Learning about sex begins as soon as your child is able to view, listen, and sense the world around her. As your child grows and develops, she may giggle with friends about "private parts", and share "dirty" jokes. Her curiosity is natural, and children of all ages have questions. When she is ready to ask you, as a parent you should be ready to answer. Talking about sex and sexuality gives you a chance to share your values and beliefs with your child.

Your child may learn many things about the world from friends, movies, television, music, the Internet, and even advertisements. When it comes to something as important as sexuality, nothing can replace the influence of a parent. The best place for your child to learn about relationships, love, commitment, and respect is from you. When your child feels loved and respected by you, he is more likely to turn to you for answers and advice. Giving advice and teaching your child to make wise choices is one of your most important jobs as a parent.

Where to begin

Everyday events will give you plenty of chances to teach your child about topics related to sex. These are called *teachable moments*. For example, talking about body parts during bath time will be much more effective than talking about body parts during dinner. A pregnancy or birth in the family is a good time to discuss how babies are conceived and born. Watching television with your child may also be a good time to discuss sexuality issues.

Teachable moments can happen anywhere – while shopping, at the movies, or even at the park. Use them when they happen. You won't need to make a speech. First, find out what your child already knows. Let your child guide the talk with her questions. Some children may not ask for information if they think you may be uneasy or embarrassed by it. Talk openly, and let your child know she can ask you about anything.

When your child begins to ask questions, the following might make it easier for both of you:

- **Don't laugh or giggle**, even if the question is cute. Your child shouldn't be made to feel ashamed for her curiosity.
- **Try not to appear overly embarrassed or serious** about the matter.
- **Be brief.** Don't go into a long explanation. Answer in simple terms. Your 4-year old doesn't need to know the details of intercourse.
- **Be honest.** Use proper names for all body parts.
- **See if your child wants or needs to know more.** Follow up your answer with, "Does that answer your question?"
- **Listen** to your child's responses and reactions.
- **Be prepared to repeat yourself.** If you are uneasy talking about sex or answering certain questions, be honest about that too. Consider asking a relative, close family friend, or your pediatrician to help talk to your child.

Questions, Questions, Questions The questions your child asks and the answers that are appropriate to give will depend on your child's age and ability to understand. Following are some of the issues your child may ask about and what he should know:

Common Questions:

"How did I get in your tummy?"

"Where was I before I got in your tummy?"

"How did I get out?"

"Where do babies come from?"

"How come girls don't have a penis?"

Your child may begin to show an interest in basic sexuality, both her own and that of the opposite sex. She may ask where babies come from. She may want to know why boys' and girls' bodies are different. She may also touch her own genitals and may even show an interest in the genitals of other children. These are not adult sexual activities, but signs of normal interest. However, your child needs to learn what is alright to do and what is not. Setting limits to exploration is really a family matter. You may decide to teach your child the following:

- Interest in genital organs is healthy and natural.
- Nudity and sexual play in public are not all right.

- No other person, including close friends and relatives, may touch her “private parts”. The exceptions are doctors and nurses during physical exams and her parents when they are trying to find the cause of any pain in the genital area.

As your child approaches school-age, she should know the following:

- Proper names of body parts
- Functions of each
- Physical differences between boys and girls

A word about...masturbation

Masturbation is a part of childhood sexuality that many parents find difficult to discuss. Up to the age of 5, it is quite common. Around age 6, children become more socially aware and may feel embarrassed about touching themselves in public. Make sure your child understands that masturbation is a private activity, not a public one. Masturbation in private may continue and is normal up to age 5.

There are times when frequent masturbation can point to a problem. It could be a sign that the child is under a lot of stress or not receiving enough attention at home. In rare cases, it could even be a tip off to sexual abuse. Some sexually abused children become overly interested in their sexuality. If masturbation becomes a problem, talk to your pediatrician. For most children under 6 years of age, masturbation is nothing to worry about. It is normal.

Television: Reducing the Negative Impact

While TV can be a good teacher, many children watch TV excessively and experience some of the negative consequences described below.

What are the harmful aspects of TV?

1. **TV displaces active types of recreation.**
2. **TV interferes with conversation and discussion.**
3. **TV discourages reading.**
4. **Heavy TV viewing (more than 4 hours per day) definitely reduces school performance:** This much TV interferes with study, reading, and thinking time. If children do not get enough sleep because they are watching TV, they will not be alert enough to learn well in on the following day.
5. **TV discourages exercise.**
6. **TV advertising encourages a demand for material possessions.**
7. **TV violence can affect how a child feels towards life and other people.**

How do I prevent TV addiction? Avoid TV for children less than 2 years of age.

1. **Encourage active recreation.**
2. **Read to your children.**
3. **Limit TV time.**
4. **Turn off the TV during meals.** Family time is too precious to be squandered on TV shows. In addition, don't have the television always on as a background sound in your house.

Next Visit: A check-up is recommended when your child is 6 years old.