

contact



Vol. 29#1 Spring 2017

For those of us who interact in the health of preschoolers

Spring is here! After a long winter, many of us are starting to think about summer holidays. Travelling with babies and young children will take some planning, whether you're travelling to the next city or town, across the country or overseas. A bit of extra planning can make any trip more enjoyable.

Keep a bag with you that has your children's supplies (e.g. a change of clothes, toys, music, and books). These will help entertain your children during the trip or if unexpected delays happen.

Start planning early. Some countries will require that your family have specific immunizations or take certain medicines before leaving Canada. This process may take several months. Check that your family's immunizations are up to date as well.

For information about additional immunizations your family may need, you may want to visit a travel clinic. To find a travel clinic near you, visit <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/service.aspx?id=7568>

Taken from Healthy Parents, Healthy Children: The Early Years



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The next newsletter will come out in Summer 2017.

Call 780-735-3013 to join the Contact email distribution list.

Previous issues of Contact are posted on the AHS Website:

<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/services/page7664.aspx>

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www.albertahealthservices.ca

Letter to the Public Health Nurse

Dear Public Health Nurse

Where can I find up to date and reliable information about immunization?

Sally

Dear Sally,

Alberta Health Services (AHS) encourages all parents to learn more about arming their children against disease by visiting immunizealberta.ca.

This website provides parents with information and support, as they consider immunization for their children.

With answers just a few clicks away, this website simplifies the search for credible immunization information in the crowded online environment. Common questions, concerns and information requests about vaccine safety, immunization and immunity have all been incorporated into a simple website parents can trust.

In addition to arming children against disease, immunization is also important for adults. Benefiting people of all ages, immunization not only protects individuals – it also arms our communities against disease. As more people are immunized, the risk of disease for everyone is reduced.

Adults need booster doses throughout their lifetime, and people may also need additional vaccines if they have certain health conditions, risks or are travelling out of country.

Below are some resources that provide more information about immunity, immunization, and how to protect your family:

- * visit www.immunizealberta.ca
- * visit <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/pages/conditions.aspx?Hwid=immun>
- * call Health Link at 811

Your Public Health Nurse



Tummy Time

A baby's skull bones are soft for the first year. As a result, flat areas on the head can develop very quickly and can change the shape of baby's head and face. Although changes to head shape don't affect baby's mental or physical growth and development, the changes can be permanent if not treated early.

Always place baby on her back to go to sleep. When baby is awake, and you are with her, place her on her tummy to play. Below are some tips for "tummy time".

- It takes time for babies to enjoy lying on their tummies – try putting baby on her tummy after every diaper change.
- The safest place for tummy time is on the floor on a clean, flat blanket. Get down on the floor with baby, face to face to encourage her to eventually lift her head up to look at you.
- Start slowly - most babies fuss at first when put on their tummy. The first few times, try it for 1 – 2 minutes. When she begins to fuss, turn her onto her back and try again later. Gradually increase tummy time as baby gets used to it.
- You can put a small, rolled-up towel under baby's chest, with her arms in front of it. This will help her hold up her head so she can look in different directions.
- Use bright toys or the sound of your voice to encourage baby to look to both sides.

Other tips for preventing flat areas on baby's head:

- Change the arm you use to carry baby - right one day, left the next.
- Carry baby with her face toward you, so her head isn't against your body.
- Limit time spent in child safety seats, bouncy seats or swings, especially before baby is 3 months old. If you use these items often, try to position baby's head so that it's supported and isn't turned to one side.
- If baby always wants to look in one direction, try to encourage her to look in the other direction as much as possible when she's awake and playing. Use toys or get down on the floor with her to play.

Flat areas can be prevented and treated. If you think baby is developing a flat spot, talk to your health care provider about where you can get ideas and services to help with your baby's head shape, and visit

<http://www.healthyparentshealthychildren.ca/young-babies-birth-to-6-months/everyday-care/your-babys-head-shape/>



Taken from Healthy Parents, Healthy Children: The Early Years

Separation Anxiety

Most babies develop separation anxiety (sometimes called 'making strange') between 7 and 18 months. At this age baby is starting to realize that he is a separate person from you.

Baby may fuss or cry when he is worried about being separated from you, can't see you, or is with people he doesn't know well. You are the person he trusts and he now knows that sometimes you aren't around. If baby finds it hard to adapt to change (part of his temperament), separation anxiety can last a little longer.

You can help children cope with separations by providing warmth and structure.

Provide warmth.

- Recognize that it's normal for babies to have separation anxiety.
- Support him and be patient as he learns to adapt.

Provide structure.

- Play peek-a-boo by briefly hiding your face with your hands or a blanket. This is a fun way to learn that you go away and come back.
- Encourage him to cuddle a favourite toy or blanket for comfort.
- Let him take his time. He will explore new people with his eyes. He may reach out to touch them, but hang on to you at the same time.
- When you leave him with someone else, say a warm "goodbye" and give him a big smile and hug when you get back. Start leaving baby with others that you trust for short stays.



Taken from Healthy Parents, Healthy Children: The Early Years

Take the Playground Safety YES Test: Checklist

Safe playgrounds help reduce the risk of injury to children. The YES test is a quick and easy way to check how safe an outdoor playground is. This YES test helps you to check that the play area, the playground surfacing, and the equipment are all ready for safe play. You'll need a measuring tape and a dime.

Take the YES test by reviewing the list of items below. If you can't answer YES to every item, the playground may need repairs or upgrades.

The Play Area

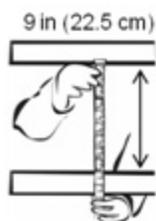
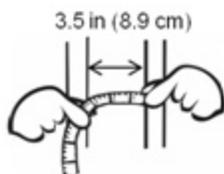
- There are no trip hazards in the play area, like tree stumps, rocks, or exposed concrete footings.
- There are no dangerous objects in the play area, like litter, broken glass, or needles.

The Equipment

- There are no open gaps that could catch loose clothing that could strangle a child. For example, s-hooks - often used to connect swing seats to chains - should only allow a dime to pass through the gaps.



- No opening is greater than 8.9 cm (3.5 inches) or less than 22.5 cm (9 inches). Larger or smaller spaces are entrapment hazards because they allow a child's body to go through but trap the head, like improperly adjusted guard rails or ladder rungs.



- There are no ropes of any kind tied to equipment. Ropes can cause strangulation.
- Raised surfaces like platforms and ramps higher than 50.8 cm (20 inches) have handrails, barriers, and/or railings to prevent falls.
- There are no sharp edges or points on the equipment that could cut or scrape, like sharp bolt ends.
- The equipment is in good working order, doesn't have broken or missing parts, and is well anchored to the ground.

The Surfacing Under and Around Equipment

Protective surfacing is a soft surface that helps to cushion falls. Grass and dirt are NOT protective surfaces.

- Loose fill surfacing (e.g., pea gravel, sand, rubber crumb) OR rubber surfacing is used under and around all pieces of equipment.
- If loose fill surfacing is used, it's at least 20.3–30.5 cm (8–12 inches) deep, 15 cm (6 inches) deep for preschool equipment, and 30 cm (12 inches) deep for full sized equipment. There is one exception to this rule: if rubber crumb is used, it's at least 15.2 cm (5 inches) deep.

loose fill 12 in (30.5 cm)



How did the playground do?

- I answered "Yes" to all the items in the list. The playground has passed the YES Test. Do the YES Test at least once a month.
- I couldn't answer "Yes" to all the items in the list. The playground may not be safe.

Environmental Health Con't

Here are possible next steps:

- If you own or operate the playground, make a step-by-step plan to increase safety. You may need to replace equipment, improve protective surfacing, or increase supervision. Get professional help if you need it.
- If you don't own or operate the playground, share your concerns with its owner or operator. For example, if the playground is in a community park, contact the municipality.

Promoting Playground Safety

As a parent or caregiver, you can use the tips below to help promote playground safety:

- ✓ Children younger than 5 years should have active, constant adult supervision. Children 5 to 9 years old should have a responsible older person nearby watching to see that they're playing safely on the equipment.
- ✓ Encourage children to use playground equipment that fits their age and stage of development. Preschool-aged children and elementary school-age children need different types of equipment.
- ✓ Take off bicycle helmets. Children who wear helmets on playgrounds are at risk of strangulation if their head gets caught in a narrow opening or if the helmet straps catch on something.
- ✓ Take off scarves and any clothing with drawstrings or other loose strings. Scarves, strings, and loose clothing put your child at risk of strangling. Wear neck warmers instead of scarves.
- ✓ Teach children to follow playground safety rules.

For more information, visit the following website:

MyHealth.Alberta.ca

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/pages/conditions.aspx?hwId=ue5156spec>



MyHealth.Alberta.ca

Taken from MyHealth.Alberta.ca

Smart Snacks for Healthy Mouths

Growing children often need more than 3 meals a day. Smart snacking will help children have energy for their busy day.² Healthy foods are important for helping to keep gums healthy and can help stop tooth decay.¹

- DO:** Pick foods from the 4 food groups. Pick snacks that are low in salt and fat.
- DO:** Give fresh or unsweetened canned fruits and vegetables.
- DO:** Give foods like milk, cheese, and yogurt that have calcium, a mineral that help harden the teeth and can help stop tooth cavities.²
- DO:** Offer whole grain crackers and breads.
- DO:** Give tap water between meals. If giving your child juice, only give as part of a snack or meal. Only give ½ cup of pure fruit juice one time a day. Do not give juice in a baby bottle or no-drip sippy cup.
- DO:** Limit the number of times a day your child eats or drinks sugar.
- DO:** Save sweets as part of dessert, AFTER the main meal. Or give fruit for dessert.

All foods and drinks, except water can cause tooth decay.



Here are some tips to cut down on sugar.

DO NOT: Give sugary or sweet snacks, like raisins, gummies, fruit leather, toffee, suckers, or other hard candies. These kinds of treats stay in the mouth a long time and stick to the teeth.

DO NOT: Let your child sip on sweet drinks throughout the day. Children, who sip on drinks like juice, pop, or fruit cocktail, will have sugars in the mouth over and over.³

DO NOT: Give children “sport” drinks because they are high in sugar, acid, and caffeine.

DO NOT: Snack before bedtime, because food left on the teeth is more likely to cause cavities at night.¹

DO NOT: Give sweets or candies as a “reward” for good behavior.

DO NOT: Buy sweets. If they are not in the house then you cannot give them out.³

Good food choices are a winning combination for good health and good teeth!

And remember to help your child brush their teeth 2 times a day (morning and before bed).

Other links for healthy eating:

- [Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating](#)

Dietitians of Canada
Sherry Palmer, RDH - AHS



¹ <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/>

² <http://saskdentists.com/healthy-snacks/43-nutrition/142-medical-conditions-2>

³ http://www.cda-adc.ca/en/oral_health/cfyt/dental_care_children/nutrition.asp

March is Nutrition Month!

This year Alberta Health Services dietitians invite you to find nutrition answers at healthyeatingstarsthere.ca. Visit the website to learn information on creating a healthy eating environment in your child care. Click on “Healthy Eating at Child Care Centres” and explore for recipes, resources, and more.

Help preschoolers in your care to build healthy eating habits for life...

Include More Vegetables and Fruit in Your Child Care Menu

Vegetables and fruits are high in fiber, vitamins and minerals; they are a nutrient-rich food to include at meals and snacks. Expose children to different types of vegetables and fruits to help them learn to accept and enjoy their taste.

- Stock up on frozen or canned types (without added sugar and salt). These stay fresh longer and don't need to be washed or cut up.
- Add extra vegetables to soups, lasagna or casserole dishes.
- Offer a variety of vegetables and fruits. Try different colours, flavours, and textures like soft bananas, crunchy cucumber sticks, or crispy apples.
- Add fruit to smoothies, cereal, muffins or pancakes.
- Serve healthy treats for special celebrations – cut vegetables and fruit into fun shapes.

Offer a Healthy Child Care Menu and Stay on Budget

You can serve healthy food without going over budget. Here are some tips to help you:

- Plan ahead – Include meals and snacks for a week or two.
- Buy in bulk – Some foods like pasta and rice are cheaper bought this way; produce like oranges, apples, and potatoes are cheaper bought in bags.
- Use beans, lentils, and split peas – These are high in protein and cost less than meat.
- Try plain cooked cereals (like oatmeal) – These cost less than pre-packaged instant cereals.

Choose Healthy Drinks for Your Child Care Menu

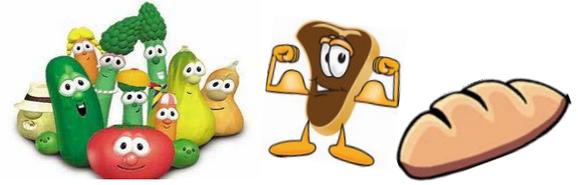
Preschoolers need 4 to 5 cups (900-1200 ml) of fluid a day. Healthy drinks can help them stay well hydrated and get important nutrients for growth like vitamin D, calcium and protein. Try offering:

- Water most often, to quench thirst. Plain water is always best.
- Milk or fortified soy beverage at meals and snacks to help meet Canada's Food Guide recommendation for young children – 2 cups (500 ml) milk a day.
- If juice is offered, only serve 100% juice. Limit to ½ cup (125ml) per day. Avoid sugary drinks, and beverages containing caffeine or sugar substitutes.



Visit www.ahs.ca/nutritionmonth for more tips, information, and materials to celebrate healthy eating at your child care.

Happy Nutrition Month 2017!



HUMMUS

Makes 50 servings of ¼ cup each (60 mL)

Ingredients:

| | Imperial | Metric |
|------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Chickpeas, canned, drained, rinsed | 4 – 19 oz cans | 4 - 540 mL cans |
| Yogurt, plain, 2% M.F. | 4 cups | 1 L |
| Lemon juice, no sugar added | ½ cup | 125 mL |
| Cumin | 4 tsp | 20 mL |
| Olive Oil | ½ cup | 125 mL |

Directions

1. Blend chickpeas, yogurt, lemon juice, olive oil, and cumin in a blender or food processor until smooth.
2. Portion ¼ cup (60 mL) onto 50 serving plates.
3. Keep leftovers in the refrigerator.

Recipe Tips

- ✓ Serve with whole wheat pita bread and cut up vegetables for a great balance snack.
- ✓ Instead of spreading mayonnaise or mustard on sandwiches, try using hummus for that extra zest.
- ✓ Leftover chickpeas? Sprinkle them on salads or toss them into soups and stews for some extra fibre and protein.
- ✓ Spice it up! Try adding hot sauce, paprika, chopped garlic, cilantro, or basil to your hummus.



This recipe is from the website “AHS Healthy Eating Starts Here” – Child Care Recipes:
<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page8943.aspx>



Resources Page



Environmental Public Health - Education

They answer general environmental public health questions about topics like safe cooking, pest problems, and mould.

They offer classes, courses, presentations, and displays on many environmental public health topics.

They are suited to the audience's needs. Information can be in-person, online, or in home study, and may be available in other languages. Some services offered are:

- Bed bugs presentations
- Courses for childcare facility staff
- Courses to operate temporary food concessions at fairs, festivals, exhibitions, carnivals, or other special events
- Displays at trade shows and expos
- Food sanitation and hygiene courses (the AHS Food Safety Course is required by Alberta's Food Regulation)
- Hand washing and personal hygiene presentations
- Home study on food safety (a certificate in basic food safety may be issued)
- Swimming pool operators course
- 3-hour courses on food safety (a certificate in basic food safety may be issued)



For more information visit <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph/eph.aspx>



IMPORTANT CONTACTS FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Do you want information about community services? Call 211</p> | <p>Government of Alberta Child Care Orientation Course http://childcare.basecorp.com/home</p> |
| <p>HealthLink – Available 24 hours a day to answer your questions. Call 811</p> | <p>AHS Environmental Public Health has some excellent resources for Child Care Agencies:</p> |
| <p>Healthy Parents Healthy Children online http://www.healthyparentshealthychildren.ca/</p> | <p>* Environmental Public Health Education Courses http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/3151.asp</p> |
| <p>To look up health information online https://myhealth.alberta.ca/</p> | <p>* Health & Safety Guidelines for Child Care Facilities http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/eph/wf-eh-health-safety-guidlines-child-care-facilities.pdf</p> |
| <p>Government of Alberta Family Day Home Standards Manual for Alberta http://humanservices.alberta.ca/documents/family-day-home-standards-manual.pdf</p> | <p>Call one number to report an outbreak or to ask questions about a possible outbreak. Outbreak pager (780-445-7226) Outbreak Prevention, Control and Management Toolkit http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/medstaff/Page13790.aspx</p> |
| <p>For ideas on creating a healthy eating environment, visit "AHS Healthy Eating Starts Here Child Care" website: http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page8941.aspx</p> | |

