

Health Awareness

A County Health Pool Publication



October 2005

October is Children's Health Month



Sponsored by the President's Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children, Children's Health Month creates a great opportunity to focus on children's health topics.

Health information on the official website of Children's Health Month, www.childrenshealth.gov, is available year round for further information. The topics are divided into six main categories: childhood illnesses, education and child care, health promotion, limiting environmental hazards, reducing risky behaviors, and safety.

Nutrition

Healthy eating in childhood and adolescence can prevent the risk of future health problems. Healthy eating habits are also important for proper growth and development.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, less than 40 percent of children and adolescents in the United States meet the U.S. dietary guidelines for saturated fat. Almost 80 percent of young people

do not eat the recommended number of fruits and vegetables.

The prevalence of children being overweight among children aged 6-11 years has more than doubled in the past 20 years and has more than tripled among adolescents aged 12-19.

Overweight young people are more likely to become overweight or obese adults, and are therefore more at risk for associated adult health problems. Promoting better lifestyle habits now can help reduce these risks.

Physical Activity

There are many benefits of regular physical activity for young people. It helps maintain healthy bones and muscles, helps reduce the risk of developing obesity and chronic diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease, and promotes psychological well-being.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests that children and adolescents who are just

beginning to be physically active should start out slowly and gradually build to higher levels. Injuries can be prevented this way and children will be less likely to feel defeated from unrealistic goals.

Suggested tips for parents include:

- Set a positive example by making physical activity a part of your family's daily routine such as taking family walks or playing active games together
- Offer positive reinforcement and encourage them as they express interest in new activities
- Ensure that the activity is age appropriate and provide appropriate protective equipment to ensure safety
- Limit the time your children watch television or play video games to no more than two hours per day

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Children's Health Month (continued from pg. 1)

- Take them to places where they can be active
- Find a convenient place to be active regularly
- Give them active toys and equipment

Children and adolescents can choose any type of moderate or higher intensity activity. This includes brisk walking, playing tag, jumping rope, and swimming.

It is recommended that children and adolescents participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity most days of the week, preferably daily.

Sun Safety

Active children may spend a lot of time outdoors. Remember to always make sure children are wearing sunscreen and to reapply it every two hours.

Try to limit time in the midday sun. The sun's rays are the strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. A hat with a wide brim also offers sun protection and it is also a good idea to wear sunglasses that provide 99 to 100 percent of UVA and UVB protection. Check the label when buying sunglasses.

County Health Pool

As part of the County Health Pool plan we provide wellness checkups and immunization as part of our preventative care program.

For more information on your particular health plan go to www.ctsi.org/chpdocuments.html and click on your health plan to access coverage information.

You may also contact CTSI at 303-861-0507 or Anthem customer service at 1-866-698-0087 for more information about your coverage.

Sources: Children's Health Month Home Page and Centers For Disease Control and Prevention



CHP welcomes Jackson County and the Pueblo Regional Building District

The County Health Pool welcomes its newest members, Jackson County and the Pueblo Regional Building District, to the pool. Their memberships were both effective July 1, 2005. We are pleased that you have joined us!

Try a Healthier Macaroni and Cheese Dish



Ingredients:

- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1/4 cup all purpose flour
- 1 cup fat-free milk
- 1/4 cup fat-free sour cream
- 1 tsp dry mustard
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 4 oz. each low-fat cheddar, jack and sharp cheddar cheeses
- 16 oz. package of pasta

Instructions: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Boil pasta according to package directions, omitting salt and fat. In separate saucepan, melt butter. Add flour and stir together.

Slowly add milk, constantly stirring to form a roux.

Reserve about 2 oz. cheese. Add the rest to the sauce, along with mustard, sour cream, and salt and pepper. Stir until cheese is melted and sauce is smooth.

Combine sauce with cooked noodles and pour into casserole or baking dish. Sprinkle remaining cheese on top. Consider adding frozen peas or broccoli just before baking. Bake uncovered at 350 degrees for 20 minutes.