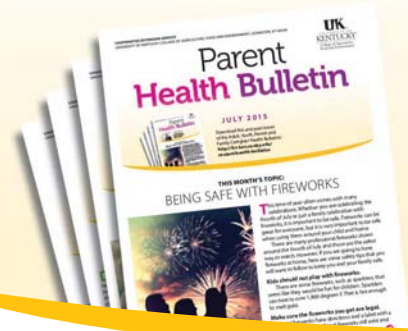


Parent Health Bulletin



FEBRUARY 2016

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: KEEPING A HEART HAPPY

Heat health is important, even for children. There are small changes you can make with your family that can help with heart health — especially lowering risk factors.

Two of the most controllable risk factors for an unhealthy heart that affect children are unhealthy eating choices and lack of regular physical activity. What can you do?

Load up on fruits and vegetables

It is recommended that a person eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day. If you are unsure how to do that, think about these ideas:

- Keep fruits and vegetables where children can see them as options for snacks.
- If your child is old enough, have him or her help in the chopping and cooking of fruits and vegetables. If a little too young for that, perhaps he or she can help you wash and clean the fruits and vegetables.

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Try doing a weekend activity that is centered around being active — take a hike, toss a ball.

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- Offer a fruit or vegetable at every meal.
- Give your child a choice of which fruit or vegetable to eat at meals.

Get moving!

Unfortunately, many children do not get enough time to move their bodies every day. Did you know that it is recommended that a child be active 60 minutes every day? When a child is active, he or she has stronger bones, muscles and heart. There is also research that shows that when children are more active they are able to learn and sleep better.

Keep fruits and vegetables where children can see them as options for snacks.

If you are unsure how to increase your child's physical activity, here are some tips to try:

- Schedule time to be active, whether it is right after school or right before dinner — whatever works best for your family.
- Be physically active together and use it as a time to bond.
- Be outside as much as possible.
- Try doing a weekend activity that is centered around being active — take a hike, toss a ball.
- Set up an area to be active indoors too. Bad weather should not be a reason to not be active.

Along with getting moving, staying away from a lot of screen time is also important. It is recommended that a child have not more than 2 hours of screen time each day. Ways you can limit the amount of time spent in front of a screen include:

- Turn the TV off during meal times.
- Don't allow your child to watch TV during homework time.
- Treat TV as a privilege that he or she needs to earn.



Working towards a happy and healthy heart can start at an early age. If you do not currently do some of these things, it is never too late to start. The habits started now will last a lifetime.

SOURCE:

Nemours KidsHealth (2015). One Formula for a Healthy Lifestyle. Accessed from: http://kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_center/healthy_eating/healthy_lifestyle.html

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Health Bulletin

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