



back to school *healthy*

Support your body with
natural tools to build a
strong immune system
and a healthy brain

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hooray!

A new school year is starting! On the list of things to do: buy school supplies, find a backpack, pick out a lunch pail, and choose the perfect first day outfit. Everyone wants to look perfect and have everything they need to have a great year. It's so much fun!

But there are important preparations to be made that you can't see! Getting your body ready to start school is as important as getting your pencils sharpened, or learning your new friends' names.

This little booklet will give you some tips and support for building a strong immune system and a healthy brain naturally so you'll be ready to learn when the first bell rings.

Good hygiene skills like washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes, and precautions like staying home when someone is sick are the basic tools for minimizing spread of viruses and bacteria, but there are many ways we can support our bodies to fight off sickness in the choices we make everyday.

God made our bodies to function properly. A healthy immune system recognizes foreign invaders and sends special cells to fight them off to protect us.

When we take care of our bodies with

*hydration, rest,
nutrition, and exercise,*

these fighter cells are better equipped to protect us from things that make us sick.



hydration

Everyone (even adults!) needs good, clean water. A good rule of thumb is to drink half of your weight in ounces of water every day. So, if you weigh 100 pounds, you'll need 50 ounces of water daily. That's a lot!

If you don't already drink that much water, start slow by replacing something else you drink like soda, juice, or milk. Our bodies don't need as much of those things, and when we feel thirsty, it's a sign that we need water.

Drinking water helps you digest your food better, helps you flush out things your body doesn't need, and keeps your brain thinking!

rest

Our bodies need rest to function. It takes lots of energy to learn new things all day at school. When we are not getting the rest we need, our brains have trouble listening to instructions, remembering to be kind, and getting our muscles to work on running faster and climbing higher.

Our bodies do their best growing when we are sleeping! Here is a quick guide for how much rest we need based on our age. (Moms and Dads need a little less since they are already full-grown.)

age	hours of sleep
2	11-12 at night & 1-2 hour nap
3-5	10 to 13 per night
6-13	9 to 11 per night
14-17	8 to 10 per night



nutrition

Eating lots of healthy fruits and vegetables is the best and tastiest way to keep our bodies healthy. There are so many options to choose from, but some of the best things to eat to support our immune systems are leafy greens like spinach or kale, blueberries, cranberries, garlic, and pomegranate.

One great way to get these fruits and veggies into even picky eaters is by blending them up in a smoothie. A banana will add some sweetness to get those greens in there without objection.

Actively avoid foods and drinks with added sugar and artificial coloring. Sugar is hard on growing bodies and brains, and interferes with our immune system function. Food colorings have been

shown to affect behavior, sleep, and mood and are just one more thing our body has to work hard to flush out.

picky eaters

Preschoolers (and teenagers, actually) are famous for cycling through favorite foods and foods they won't touch. If you are in the middle of these stretches, continue offering healthy foods at every meal, but consider supplementing with a **whole food-based multivitamin** to be sure your kiddo is getting what he or she needs.

Omega-3 fatty acids are vital for healthy brain development. These nutrients are found in fish, flax and hemp seeds, and walnuts, and because those food items are scarce in our typical diets, are often supplemented.

Reach out to a doctor, nutritionist, or dietitian for brand recommendations. There are many options that contain fillers or other undesirable ingredients you'll want to avoid.



exercise

Besides building strong muscles and bones, regular exercise, particularly outdoors, can help support a strong immune system by releasing toxins, increasing respiration, lowering stress, and affects our mood by releasing endorphins.

Sunlight on the skin stimulates the body's production of Vitamin D which has a protective effect on several body systems.

Regular exercise is particularly important for growing kids who are developing hand-eye coordination, gross and fine motor skills, social skills, and sensory function, and are learning to interpret the world around them.

other tips

Talk to your kids about their feelings. Worry, anxiety, and fear are difficult emotions for kids to handle, and can affect their health if they are not addressed.

Minimize or avoid harsh chemicals in your home. Many cleaners, air fresheners, candles, detergents, and other household items contain hazardous ingredients. As these toxins compound in our environment they are absorbed into our bodies and cause damage or challenges.

If you have questions about any of these topics or would like more information on supporting your family's health naturally, please reach out. I'd be happy to point you in the right direction!

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