



# Family Health

May 2010

Newsletter

## May is National Better Sleep Month: Tips to Improve Sleep

Sleep deprivation contributes to decreased immune response, impaired memory and concentration, and accidents. Driving while severely sleep deprived has been shown to be equivalent to driving while drunk. In general, adults should get 7-8 hours of sleep a night. Getting around 6 hours a night, on a consistent basis has been shown to age the body at three times the normal rate. Here are some tips to improve sleep.

- **Make your bedroom a sleep sanctuary.** Keep stress and electronics, like computers or TVs, out of the bedroom. Kids may like falling asleep to the TV, but they will sleep better without it. Bedrooms should be kept cool, dark, and comfortable.

- **Create a relaxing bedtime routine.** Do something to help you relax before going to bed like reading a book. Parents can help their kids by reading them a bedtime story. Doing a relaxation technique, like deep breathing, can also help to decrease stress and prepare the body for sleep.

- **Avoid nicotine, caffeine, and alcohol before bedtime.** After the kids have gone to bed, these may seem like a tempting way to relax,

but they can contribute to poor sleep and keep you awake.

- **Check the size of your mattress.** It should be large enough to accommodate movement, like stretching and turning, in the night.

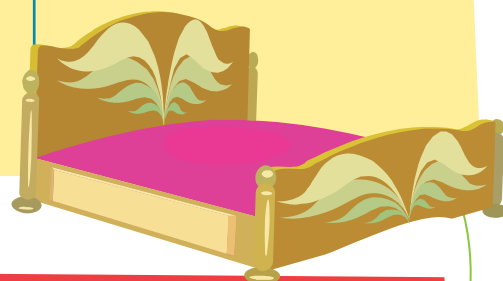
- **Replace old, lumpy mattresses or pillows.** Mattresses should be replaced every 6-7 years, and pillows every year.

- **Keep a consistent bedtime schedule.** Go to bed and get up around the same time every day, even on weekends. Children may want to stay up on the weekend, but keeping a regular sleep/wake schedule will improve their quality of sleep.

- **Finish eating 2-3 hours before bedtime.** Try to eat

family dinner earlier because large, heavy meals take time and energy to digest that can interfere with quality of sleep. Avoid heavy snacks or large amounts of liquid right before bed, too.

- **Exercise on a regular basis, but finish exercising 2 hours before you go to sleep.** As little as 20-30 minutes can help, and they can be broken into smaller increments to accommodate a busy schedule. Playing with your kids is a great way to get some exercise in, like riding bikes or playing catch together.



## Prevention Corner

### May is Healthy Vision Month

The National Eye Institute established May as Healthy Vision Month to help educate communities about the importance of eye exams. During the first twelve years of life, vision contributes to about eighty percent of learning. Good vision is linked with growth, development, and academic success, according to the American Optometric Association. Eyes are an important part of health and an eye care professional is the only one who can determine if your eyes are healthy. Ensure your family sees clearly by scheduling a comprehensive eye exam today. For help finding an optometrist, learning more about eye exams, or getting tips for keeping eyes healthy, visit: [www.aoa.org/x5428.xml](http://www.aoa.org/x5428.xml) or

[www.aoa.org/x5428.xml](http://www.aoa.org/x5428.xml) or <http://www.nei.nih.gov/healthyeyes/eyehealthtips.asp>

## Kids Corner:

### Stained Glass Window Art

Instructions for making stained glass art to be hung in the window. A fun craft that kids can do for Mother's Day.

#### Materials needed:

- paper
- crayons
- cotton balls
- very small amount of cooking oil in a bowl
- hole punch
- scissors
- string

#### Directions:

1. Take a piece of paper and color a picture on it using the crayons.
2. Place a few cotton balls in the very small amount of oil.
3. Flip the paper over (drawing side down) and slowly and thoroughly rub the cotton balls on the paper.
4. Let them dry.
5. Cut them out with the scissors.
6. Punch a hole toward the top of the picture and thread string through the hole.
7. Hang in window for your mother to enjoy.



## FAMILY FRIENDLY HEALTHY RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### Cauliflower Popcorn

Serves 4

#### Ingredients

- 1 head cauliflower, cut into small florets
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- kosher salt

#### Directions

1. Heat oven to 400° F.
2. In a large bowl, combine the cauliflower, oil, and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Transfer to a baking sheet and spread in a single layer.
3. Roast, stirring once, until golden brown and tender, about 30 minutes.



## Here Comes the Sun



The sun is out and summer fun is on its way. Though playing outside leads to an active, healthy lifestyle, be cautious of skin damage and UVR exposure.

- A blistering sunburn in childhood doubles the risk of developing any type of skin cancer
- Children under age 10 are at high risk of skin damage from UVR
- UVR exposure causes 90% of all skin cancers.

### Have fun and be safe

Make a fashion statement while protecting yourself from sun exposure this summer. Sunglasses protect both the skin around the eye and the eye itself. Look for glasses that:

- block 99-100% of UVA & UVB rays
- cover the most skin, so look for large, wraparound styles
- Combine your fashion forward look with broad-spectrum sunscreen containing SPF of 15 or higher to increase sun safety this summer.

### Family Picnic Tips

Picnics are a great way to enjoy the summer sun and bond with your family. Here are some helpful tips to have a fun, safe picnic.

- Make sure the picnic area is in a safe location
- Check the weather and dress accordingly
- Pack insect repellent and sunscreen
- Bring healthy foods for everyone to enjoy
- Make sure hot foods stay hot and cold foods stay cold
- Do not eat food that has been left out longer than an hour
- Stay hydrated
- Plan a fun, physical activity (ex: bike ride, Frisbee)
- Relax and enjoy each other's company