

Prevention for Preteens

helping to protect kids today for healthy tomorrows



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Information on healthy lifestyles for a healthy adolescence

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Schedule a well-child visit with your doctor today.

References: **1.** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, National Adolescent Health Information Center, University of California, San Francisco. *Improving the health of adolescents & young adults: A guide for states and communities.* US Dept of Health and Human Services; Atlanta, Ga: 2004. **2.** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Immunization of adolescents: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the American Medical Association. 1996;45(RR-13):1–16. **3.** Lewis CW. Childhood obesity. In: Berkowitz CD, ed. *Pediatrics: A Primary Care Approach.* 2nd ed. WB Saunders Company; Philadelphia, Pa; 2000:501–506. **4.** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Youth risk behavior surveillance—United States, 2003. *MMWR.* 2004;53(SS-2):1–95. **5.** US Dept of Health and Human Services. Take charge of your health. Available at: http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/take_charge.htm. Accessed January 17, 2005.



Is Your Preteen Up to Date on Recommended Vaccinations?

Recommended vaccinations begin soon after birth and continue throughout life. Being aware of the vaccinations that are appropriate for your preteen can be an important step in maintaining your preteen's health. The best source for this information is your preteen's doctor.

Resources for Parents

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
1-800-311-3435 www.cdc.gov

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
1-800-370-2944 www.nichd.nih.gov

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Preparing your preteen for the changes ahead

- Annual medical checkups continue to be important.
 - Encourage your preteen to ask the doctor questions about changes in their growth and development.
 - If needed, talk with the doctor about your preteen's diet and exercise.
- Be sure to discuss behavior and lifestyle choices with your preteen; discourage drinking, smoking, and drug use.
- Stress the benefits of using safety gear (seat belts, bike helmets, sports gear).
- Be available to help your preteen through this time of change.

Resources for Parents

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
1-847-434-4000 www.aap.org

American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
1-800-274-2237 www.familydoctor.org

Healthy Steps to Weight Control

Today, obesity is a significant health concern in the United States for people of all ages, including preteens. Sometimes the cause is family genes; more often, obesity results from eating too many calories and/or not getting enough exercise.³

In general, people eat more now than they did 30 years ago and they are less active. A preteen's activities may be curtailed because of safety concerns or because parents are at work. Instead of getting exercise, many preteens spend free time with computers, video games, and television.³

As many as 14% of US children are overweight.^{3,4} The problem can affect a preteen's social life. It increases a preteen's risk for lifelong health issues like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, Type II diabetes, and problems with muscles and bones.³

What's more, there's a 50% chance that an overweight child older than 6 years of age will be obese as an adult.³

The good news? In many cases, obesity can be treated. Both family and preteen must be willing to adopt healthy eating and exercise habits. These changes work best when they are thought of as part of a new lifestyle rather than as a quick fix. Diet and exercise changes made in childhood can help reduce problems with health and weight in adulthood. They can also aid in proper physical growth and development.

Help your preteen take healthy steps to weight control now by following these tips:

DIET:

Your preteen's diet should include:

- A variety of foods low in calories
- 3 balanced meals a day
- More lean meats and fewer fatty meats
- Fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain foods
- Fewer prepackaged foods and snacks
- Less soda and other sugary drinks

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:

Encourage your preteen to⁵:

- Spend less time watching TV, playing video games, or sitting at the computer
- Incorporate physical activity into his or her daily routine

Ask your healthcare provider about physical activity that is appropriate for your preteen.



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Set the Stage for Your Preteen to be a Healthy Young Adult

Preparing your preteen for the changes ahead: Annual checkups can help



The preteen years are a time of change. Your preteen faces not only physical changes but mental and emotional ones as well. This time is also full of choices. Preteens begin to choose behaviors and lifestyles that can shape their health.¹

As a parent, you can do several things to help prepare for this stage of your preteen's life. Here are some tips from leading healthcare experts²:

- Take your preteen to the doctor every year for a well visit.
- Ask the doctor about preventive services that may be appropriate for your preteen, including vaccinations.

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