

10 Ways to Dramatically Increase Your Child's Health

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Our children are supposed to thrive. And they normally do when we allow them to develop naturally without undue interference and provide them with essential required components for health.

I put together a list of the most important ways you can increase and maintain optimum health in your children. Keep in mind that you don't have to do everything all at once. It can be overwhelming when you try to make too many changes too quickly. You can begin slowly and take one step at a time. There are probably things you are already doing or have done (for instance, your child may be past the time for breastfeeding).

If you're a new parent with a baby on the way, this is perfect timing. This information should help you give them a great beginning.

If your child is older, rest assured that there is always something more you can do to improve your child's health. And it is never too late to begin.

This short list is an introduction to natural child health care. There is much more to know. The articles on Healthy Child's website and future articles, interviews, seminars, etc. that are published in Healthy Child newsletter will provide greater depth of information.

Breastfeed - Exclusively and Extended

You've heard the term, Breast is Best. It's absolutely true. Babies are designed to thrive exclusively on human milk. Breastfeeding promotes proper brain development and protects against infectious and chronic diseases. It provides all the nutrition your baby needs.

When you breastfeed exclusively, you give your baby only breastmilk without any additional food or drink, not even water. Supplementing with formula can inhibit the natural flow and supply of breastmilk, decrease the nutrition and immune factors a baby would receive by getting breastmilk alone, and may undermine the ongoing mother and child breastfeeding/bonding experience.

What is meant by extended breastfeeding is to breastfeed long-term (as long as possible) and let your child decide when to wean. This builds a healthy immune system, increases the mother/child bond, and is by far the healthiest thing you can do for your child. Breastmilk continues to provide nutrition and immune factors during the first and second years of life and even beyond.

The World Health Organization recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, followed by continued extended breastfeeding with healthy foods for up to two years or beyond.

If you are unable to breastfeed, the next best thing is to receive donor breastmilk. If not able to obtain donor milk, then make your own formula according to nutritional guidelines that come as close to human milk as possible. Commercial formula is available only as a last resort.

<http://www.healthychild.com/for-healthy-immunity/breastfeeding-for-a-strong-immune-system/>

<http://www.westonaprice.org/Children-s-Health/>

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<http://www.westonaprice.org/Feeding-Babies.html>

Formula Recipes

<http://www.westonaprice.org/Recipes-for-Homemade-Baby-Formula.html>

Donor Milk

This site provides an alternative to expensive milk banks that pasteurize the milk. Pasteurization not only kills bacteria (both good and bad), it may also kill the essential immune components of breastmilk.

<http://milkshare.birthingforlife.com/>

Vitamin D - Ensure an Optimum Level

Vitamin D is extremely important to your child's health. It's crucial for your child's brain development and immune system. The current RDA and the usual amounts of vitamin D in multi-vitamins is not enough. And it's impossible to get enough from food alone to maintain optimal levels.

Children should be getting about 1,000 IU of vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol) per 25 pounds of body weight. Both children and adults should have 25(OH)D levels greater than 50 ng/mL, year-round.

If you're pregnant or breastfeeding, your levels need to be optimal so that your baby is not vitamin D deficient. This article explains more:

<http://www.healthychild.com/pregnancy/pregnancy-and-gestational-vitamin-d-deficiency/>

20-30 minutes of summer sun exposure (without sunscreen) produces approximately 10,000 IU of vitamin D in a light-skinned person. For darker skin, exposure may need to be longer. If your child is not getting a good amount of sun exposure almost every day, vitamin D needs to be supplemented.

Listen to this interview with John Cannell, MD, Director of the Vitamin D Council on preventing vitamin D deficiency in pregnancy, babies and children. He gives specifics on vitamin D and provides important details about vitamin D supplements.

Dr. Cannell's Interview:

<http://www.healthychild.com/immune-system-support/vitamin-d-deficiency-in-pregnancy-babies-children/>

You'll find plenty of research and information about Vitamin D at this site:

<http://www.vitamindcouncil.org/>

Whole foods Diet

Stop buying the processed, convenience foods that are loaded with corn syrup and other refined sugars, unhealthy fats, processed white flour, preservatives, additives, and colorings. These denatured, processed foods do not provide sufficient nutrients to allow a child's body to reach its full potential of health.

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Children need natural, whole foods that are prepared and preserved in a way that promotes health, not disease. Whole foods are unrefined grains, beans, nuts, seeds, fruits and vegetables as well as moderate amounts of unprocessed, humanely raised, grass-fed animal products. Your child's body relies on the nutrients from these foods for proper growth as well as mental and physical vitality. A deficiency of even one important nutrient can cause imbalances that can lead to disease. Whole foods also provide a wealth of protective compounds that can help prevent disease.

In addition to important minerals, children's diets should contain large amounts of natural vitamins A and C derived from fruits (oranges, strawberries, peaches, nectarines, mango) and vegetables (broccoli, carrots, squash, yams, red bell peppers). Vitamin A is also found in fish and eggs. They also need calcium, magnesium and other minerals to maintain health and process other nutrients. The best non-dairy sources of calcium are dark green vegetables and sesame seeds (or tahini). Vitamin D is needed for calcium absorption and magnesium, zinc, boron, and vitamin K are co-factors necessary for vitamin D to work properly. Please understand the body needs a varied whole foods diet to obtain all the nutrients that work synergistically to optimize health.

<http://www.healthychild.com/child-nutrition/whole-foods-nutrition-for-healthy-kids/>

<http://www.healthychild.com/child-nutrition/processed-food-and-low-fat-diets/>

<http://www.healthychild.com/child-nutrition/the-health-benefits-of-grassfed-animal-products/>

<http://www.healthychild.com/child-nutrition/why-grassfed-is-best/>

<http://www.healthychild.com/teaching-wellness/encouraging-children-to-eat-healthy/>

Healthy Fats

Healthy fats supply nutrients that are essential for growth and are necessary for energy as well as the absorption and metabolism of some nutrients. Fats are vitally important to the brain, which is 70 percent fat. They are used for building the membranes around every cell in the body and also play a role in the formation of hormones. Cold-pressed olive and flaxseed oils, fish oils, seeds, nuts, eggs, avocados, grass-fed meats, butter and whole, raw milk from grass-fed cows are good fat-containing foods.

These articles provide important information on essential fatty acids (EFAs):

<http://www.healthychild.com/child-nutrition/children-need-fats-to-be-healthy/>

<http://www.healthychild.com/child-nutrition/fats-and-oils-for-childrens-health/>

Reduce the Sugar

Most kids get way too much sugar in their diets. Sugar can suppress immunity and create mineral deficiencies, acidic digestive issues, obesity, diabetes, tooth decay, and a host of other chronic health problems. It also can cause a rapid rise of adrenaline and lead to hyperactivity, anxiety, attention problems, and irritability. You can reduce the amount your child eats, replace it with whole fruit and use healthier sweeteners in baking.

<http://www.healthychild.com/sugar-and-sweeteners/sugar-n-spice-and-everything-nice/>

<http://www.healthychild.com/sugar-and-sweeteners/stevia-healthy-and-sweet/>

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Reduce the toxins

Babies' small bodies are much more vulnerable to toxic chemicals than adults since their neurological, immunological, respiratory, and other biological systems are still developing, limiting their ability to detoxify and excrete the many different toxins entering their fragile systems. Chemical exposure during the critical period of brain development can be particularly problematic. Low-level chemical exposures during susceptible periods of development can cause more harm than high doses later in life.

Read our comprehensive report on protecting your child from toxic exposures:

<http://www.healthychild.com/protect-your-baby-from-toxic-exposures/>

More articles:

<http://www.healthychild.com/preventing-toxic-exposures/>

Question antibiotics

Antibiotics have saved many lives over the past 45 years. We are truly fortunate to have them available for serious bacterial infections. Unfortunately, antibiotics are excessively prescribed, especially to children. The Center for Disease Control estimates that of the 235 million doses of antibiotics given each year, between 20 and 50 percent are unnecessary. Tragically, this overuse of antibiotics can cause devastating health consequences to children.

<http://www.healthychild.com/pharmaceutical-drugs/consequences-of-excessive-antibiotic-use/>

<http://www.healthychild.com/pharmaceutical-drugs/antibiotics-for-strep/>

Question Vaccines

If you dig a little deeper into the vaccine issue, you'll find many gaps and limitations in the data and knowledge regarding vaccine safety. Vaccines are capable of causing serious damage. Because they contain lab-altered viruses, bacteria and toxic substances, vaccines have the ability to cause mild to severe neurological and immune damage, or even death, depending on the vaccine given, the combination of vaccines given, the health of the child at the time of vaccination, and the genetic or biological factors that predispose the child to this damage. Many parents and doctors are beginning to question the practice of injecting toxic substances into the bodies of small babies and artificially manipulating their fragile immune systems during the crucial time of brain and immune development.

<http://www.healthychild.com/vaccine-choices/>

Establish a Wellness Mindset

In raising healthy children, it's not enough to just focus on the physical aspect of health. To be truly healthy, a child's emotional health must be nurtured and strengthened. Developing a mental attitude of wellness is also essential. When we adopt an attitude of wellness, we take on a belief that being well is a natural, normal state. Our goal is to have outstanding, vibrant health, not just to be free of disease. With a wellness attitude, we know that we have control over our own body and how healthy it will be.

We can teach and help our children to grow up with an attitude of wellness. Children have much more control over their own health than you may think. The mind is a very powerful mechanism with miraculous control over health and healing. The more children learn to use the extraordinary powers of

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their minds, the healthier and happier they will be. They may also live longer than someone who takes a passive or negative approach to health.

Frequently remind your child that his or her body is amazing and they are healthy and well.

<http://www.healthychild.com/teaching-wellness/a-wellness-approach-for-children/>

Create and Maintain a Healthy Parent-Child Bond

To help our children reach their greatest potential, we must first create a strong bond and connection with them before, during, and after birth and consistently nurture and strengthen this connection throughout their entire childhood. Children who receive continual nurturing, plenty of loving physical contact, and have a healthy, bonded relationship with at least one parent know at a deep, core level that they are loved and valued for who they are - just because they exist. With a healthy sense of their value and worthiness, children can more easily tap into their natural state of health and happiness and develop their full potential - physically, emotionally, and mentally. We show them how to love and value themselves by being present for them and tending to their emotional needs.

<http://www.healthychild.com/attachment-and-connection/parenting-our-children-to-reach-their-full-potential/>

More articles on bonding and attachment:

<http://www.healthychild.com/attachment-and-connection/>

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