



healthy kids **NOW**

Five ways to keep your kids diabetes-free



You've seen the headlines — type 2 diabetes is on the rise in children and teens. Almost 4,000 young people are diagnosed with the condition every year. But you can prevent your little ones from becoming another health statistic.

The main culprit in the diabetes battle is excess weight. More kids are overweight now — and most who develop type 2 diabetes weigh in on the heavy side. But some simple lifestyle changes can prevent childhood obesity, staving off diabetes and many other health problems. Here's how to help your kids keep diabetes at bay:

1. BE A ROLE MODEL. Preaching the virtues of broccoli and bicycling won't mean much

if your children see you sneaking cookies by the dozen. Eat healthy foods and make sure your kids see you having fun while being active.

2. DINE TOGETHER. Getting the whole family involved can make healthy eating a no-brainer. Let your kids help plan a meal at least once a week. They'll learn about nutrition and cooking and will be more likely to eat a variety of healthy foods.

3. ENCOURAGE EXERCISE. According to experts, children need at least one hour of physical activity every day. The best workouts are activities they'd do on their own, such as playing basketball or tag with their friends. Plan active family outings like zoo visits and bike rides.

4. GET HELP TO MANAGE YOUR CHILDREN'S WEIGHT. If you think your children might be overweight, talk with their doctor. Don't put your children on a diet without medical advice. Your children are also eligible for six free nutrition counseling sessions. Call customer service for the name of a local registered dietitian.

5. KNOW THE SYMPTOMS. Children with type 2 diabetes may begin urinating frequently or lose weight without any reason. They also may have blurred vision, feel tired or nauseated, or be very thirsty. See the doctor right away if you spot these signs. They often develop slowly.

If your child has type 2 diabetes or is at increased risk due to being overweight or a family history of diabetes, high blood pressure, or abnormal cholesterol tests, call a Health Coach from the Connections Program. They can help you and your child develop an action plan to help manage your child's weight. You can reach a Health Coach 24 hours a day, seven days a week at **1-800-ASK-BLUE** at no additional cost to you.

Sources: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, American Diabetes Association, National Diabetes Education Program, American Academy of Family Physicians

Acne scars: more than skin deep

If beauty is in the eye of the beholder, then many a teenage boy looks into the mirror each day and sees a frog instead of a prince.

Acne is hereditary, and 85 percent of all teenagers have it. Most teens with acne are self-conscious, shy, and embarrassed, girls more so than boys. Hormones play a role in acne in both girls and boys. Girls mature earlier, so they tend to get acne earlier.

What helps and what doesn't?

Scientists find no link between diet and acne. Nor are cosmetics usually to blame. Light washing once or twice a day removes surface oil and excess bacteria, but scrubbing may further inflame the skin. Over-the-counter medicines, such as benzoyl peroxide, can help with mild or moderate acne.

When an acne attack doesn't clear up within two months, early medical treatment can prevent later physical scarring. Doctors use anti-inflammatory drugs, antibiotics, and hormones to treat acne.

Healing from within

The ultimate goal of acne treatment is to prevent psychological scars as well as physical ones. Teens suffer when they can't put their best face forward.

Not surprisingly, it's the teen's own view of how bad she or he looks that matters, not an objective rating of the severity of the acne. It's also no surprise that as treatment begins to work and skin clears, a teen's outlook on life is brighter, too.

For more information about teen acne treatment, go to www.healthychildren.org and type "acne" in the search box.

Sources: Susan B. Dickey, Ph.D., R.N., associate professor of nursing, Temple University; American Academy of Pediatrics



Preparing teens for independence

Before teens leave home, you need to teach them to make their own health care decisions. How? By giving them information and involving them in their own self-care from an early age.

By involving teens as full participants in their self-care, they're more likely to choose healthy behaviors throughout their lives.

To help your teen move toward health care independence:

- Be a good role model. Take medications as directed, follow doctors' instructions, eat nutritious foods, exercise, and make other healthy choices.
- Don't smoke, abuse alcohol, or take illegal drugs. That sends a powerful message that these activities jeopardize health and well-being.
- Encourage your child's independent thought and expression.

Your child will gain a healthy sense of self and a greater ability to resist peer pressure.

- Make sure your teen knows the facts on reproductive health. That will help lead to informed, responsible decisions on safe sex, for instance.
- Work with your child's doctor to help your teen make age-appropriate decisions about treatment.
- If your teen has a chronic illness, such as diabetes or asthma, help the child learn as much as possible about managing the condition.

Knowledge is empowering. It can help your youngster feel more in control. It's critical for parents to help their children accept appropriate responsibility for caring for themselves.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics

BEATING an eating disorder

With eating disorders affecting girls at ever-younger ages, a surprisingly simple tactic might help.

Dine as a family

Girls who ate five family meals per week had about one-fourth the risk for extreme weight control practices. Gathering for a family meal lets parents model healthy eating habits to children. It also gives them a chance to talk with their children.

Eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia have risen steadily to affect nearly 11 million people, the National Eating Disorders Association says. Diagnoses now peak among girls ages 11 to 13.

Making family meals a priority is not only a positive experience, but it can protect girls from destructive eating habits.

Anorexia and bulimia can cause nutritional deficiencies, organ damage, and even death. It's important to recognize and treat eating disorders quickly.



Treatment involves mental health counseling and nutritional and medical therapy.

What to look for

Girls with anorexia:

- have an intense fear of being fat;
- feel fat despite being very thin;
- are typically perfectionists with low self-esteem;
- eat very little, count calories, and may weigh their portions;
- often lose weight quickly;
- deny feeling hungry and avoid eating in front of others;
- may exercise compulsively.

Girls with bulimia:

- eat huge amounts within hours, then purge by taking laxatives or vomiting;
- often make excuses to go to the bathroom right after meals;
- may eat abnormally large amounts of food without gaining weight;
- may have an average or above-average weight.

Sources: Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, National Eating Disorders Association

Independence Blue Cross notice of privacy practices

At Independence Blue Cross (IBC), the protection of your privacy is very important to us. This is why we have policies and procedures regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of member data known as protected health information (PHI). These policies include: the company's routine uses and disclosures of PHI; use of authorizations; access to PHI; internal protection of oral, written, and electronic PHI; and protection of information disclosed by the company to employees.

In order to administer your health benefits effectively, IBC may collect and share PHI about you in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Examples of how this information might be used include payment for covered services and for health care operations in general. Detailed information can be found online at www.ibx.com, or you can call Customer Service at **1-800-464-5437** to obtain a written copy of our privacy policies.



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CHIP: Remember to renew!

The Caring Foundation verifies children's eligibility for CHIP once each year. Your child's renewal form will be mailed to your home every year, 90 days before the anniversary of enrollment. To avoid your child's coverage being cancelled, it is extremely important that you complete the renewal form and return it to the Caring Foundation as soon as possible.

You have three choices:

- Go to **www.compass.state.pa.us** and submit your child's renewal information online.
- Call **1-800-986-5437** and renew by phone.
- Complete the form you receive in the mail, and return it to the Caring Foundation.

In all cases, you must sign the signature page and mail it back, along with copies of your current income documentation.

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Your child's CHIP benefits cover two routine dental visits per year at no cost to you when you use a United Concordia participating provider.

This statement is true.



A member should visit the dentist for routine services (such as cleaning, scaling, and polishing of teeth) two times per year, but limited to once every six months. A pregnant member is eligible for one additional visit.

So, if it's been more than six months since your child's last routine

dental visit, contact your child's participating United Concordia CHIP network dentist today, and schedule an appointment.

If your child does not have a dentist or your dentist is not participating in the United Concordia CHIP network and you need help finding one, do one of the following:

- Log on to the United Concordia website at **www.ucci.com/pachip**. Click the *Search for a PA CHIP Dentist* button.
- Call United Concordia at **1-800-332-0366**, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and ask for assistance in requesting a participating dentist, or request a United Concordia CHIP network provider directory.