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ConnectCare News

Your Medicaid and ARKids First Connection to a Medical Home • Winter 2012

Cool Weather Means Cold and Flu Season

When is an antibiotic needed to treat an infection?

Colds, sore throats and ear aches can be caused by bacteria or viruses. You should see your doctor if your child has a cold or sore throat that will not go away or has a high fever. The kind of medicine used for colds, sore throats or ear aches depends on if it is caused by a virus or bacteria. If your child has an illness that is caused by bacteria, your doctor may give you an antibiotic medicine. Antibiotic medicine will only work if your child's illness is caused by bacteria. Antibiotic medicines will not fight a virus. When an antibiotic medicine is not prescribed, ask your child's doctor what you can do to help your child feel better.

TIPS to know when your doctor does not give an antibiotic medicine for your child's illness:

- **Green colored mucus from the nose is NOT always a sign that an antibiotic medicine is needed.** It is normal for mucus to change color as the body fights the infection.
- **Most coughs and colds are caused by viruses.** Antibiotics do not work on viruses.
- **Illness caused by a virus, like colds, may go away without treatment in a week or two.** Ask your child's doctor what you can do to help your child feel better when an antibiotic medicine is not needed.
- **Illness caused by bacteria can be treated with an antibiotic medicine.** There are many different kinds of antibiotic medicines. Your doctor will know the right antibiotic medicine for your child's infection.

Be on the **SAFE SIDE** and always talk with your doctor about the best way to care for your child when they are sick.

Source: Dirk Haselow, MD, PhD, Arkansas State Epidemiologist, Medical Director for Infectious Disease and Immunizations, Center for Health Protection



What is ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder?)

ADHD is a condition in children that has three different kinds of symptoms:

- Difficulty paying attention and staying on task
- Being overactive
- Acting without thinking

ADHD is a condition that can affect children and teens. It is one of the more common childhood conditions that effect behavior and learning. School and learning can be very hard. The exact cause is not known. It is not caused by bad parents or bad teachers or anything a child has done. Children may first develop ADHD signs at an early age (between 3 and 6 years old). ADHD is most often found in elementary school (between 7 and 9 years old).

A child with ADHD may:

- Daydream a lot
- Not listen
- Be easily sidetracked from schoolwork or play
- Forget things
- Be in constant motion or not able to stay in their seat
- Squirm or fidget
- Talk too much
- Not able to play quietly
- Act and speak without thinking
- Have trouble taking turns
- Interrupt others

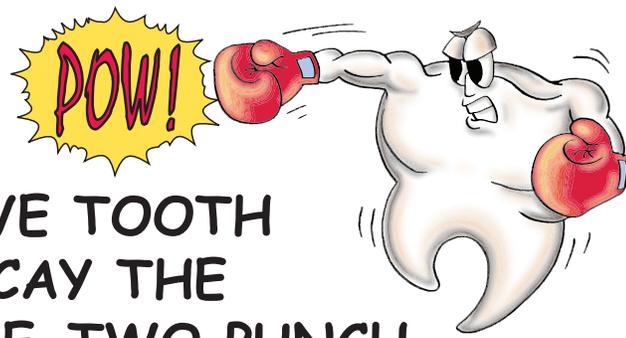


There is no single test to diagnose ADHD. Other learning and behavior problems have some of the same signs. There can be many different reasons a child acts the way they do. Many times children will show these signs for a short time as a part of growing up.

There is no cure for ADHD, but there are treatments that can help the symptoms. These treatments include medicines, and behavior training and school programs.

If you think your child may have behavior or learning problems, talk with your school nurse or your child's doctor. They can help you decide on the right treatment or if you need more help from a specialist.

To learn more about ADHD, go to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/> or call 1-800-232-4636.



GIVE TOOTH DECAY THE ONE-TWO PUNCH-FLUORIDATED WATER AND DENTAL SEALANTS!

Tooth decay is the number one disease of children. Tooth decay can cause pain and infection that causes poor school work and missed school days. Also, decayed teeth can cause your child to be embarrassed. But worse, tooth infection can cause serious, life threatening sickness. Children should get regular dental check-ups beginning at age one.

What causes tooth decay?

Sugar you eat or drink combines with bacteria in your mouth to form acid. The acid takes the minerals out of the tooth causing a hole in the tooth which can lead to tooth infection.

How do you stop tooth decay?

Drink fewer sodas, Kool-Aid, juice and other sweetened drinks. Chew sugarless gum. Watch how often you eat or drink sugar. Brush your teeth twice a day to remove bacteria. Use dental floss every day. Get regular dental checkups and cleanings to remove bacteria buildup. Get sealants on your child's teeth (a thin plastic coating covering the tops of children's teeth) and drink fluoridated water out of the water faucet. The best time to get dental sealants for children is between the ages of six and 14.

What is fluoridated water?

Fluoride is a natural mineral found in water that helps your body repair your teeth. Most water in Arkansas has been fluoridated—that means the natural level of fluoride in the water has been changed to help prevent tooth decay in everyone. Drinking fluoridated water keeps teeth covered with the healing powers of fluoride. Fluoride is not often found in bottled water. To help you and your child keep from getting tooth decay, drink the clear, pure water from your kitchen sink faucet!

Tooth decay can be prevented! Follow these simple steps above for a healthier mouth and body.

*Source: Carol Amerine, RD, MSDH
Office of Oral Health
Arkansas Department of Health*

Breastfeeding: What's in it for Mom?

It is no secret that nature intends for babies to be breastfed. Babies who do not receive their mother's milk are sick more often and have more health and weight problems in life. Breastfeeding is good for mothers too. Mothers who have successfully breastfed will tell you the many reasons they enjoyed breastfeeding such as:

Weight Loss: Breastfeeding burns calories! It takes energy to produce milk. Many mothers find that they lose the weight they gained during pregnancy more quickly.

Saves Money: Mothers have shared how breastfeeding saved them the cost of formula and supplies needed to feed their babies – beyond what WIC provided.

More Sleep: Breastfeeding mothers actually get more sleep! Caring for a newborn baby is a tough job. Newborn babies should wake up about every two hours. This means they are healthy and growing and this is a good sign. Adults don't do very well with two hours of sleep at a time, so the first few weeks of a baby's life can be tough. Mothers who have breastfed will tell you they were happy to nurse their baby and not have to fix and warm a bottle. In those first few weeks, every minute of sleep helps!

Healthier Baby: Mothers who breastfed successfully are happy that their baby was hardly ever sick. Having a sick baby is scary. No one likes to see a baby suffer from a cold or earache. There are antibodies in breast milk that help boost a baby's ability to fight sickness. Mothers share how breastfeeding saved them money because they hardly ever had to stay home with a sick baby.

Closeness: A mother will tell you how she loved the close feeling she had with her baby when she breastfed. Tears will often appear as a mother recalls those moments with her baby. A priceless feeling!

Relaxed Feeling: Mothers who breastfed said how relaxed they were during that time. Hormones released while the baby nurses are soothing to mom. This helps lessen the risk of anxiety and depression. They said it felt great on busy days to be able to sit down to nurse and have that calming feeling spread over them.

Less Cancer: Mothers say they feel good knowing they used their body the way nature intended. They

lessen their own risk of future breast, uterine and ovarian cancers by breastfeeding. That means they increase their chances of being around to see their children and grandchildren grow up!

Proud Feeling: Mothers who breastfed say they feel good about what they did for their baby. They feel proud knowing they gave their baby exactly what it needed to grow up happy and healthy. They also feel proud because they are the only person in the whole world who could do this for their baby. Again-priceless!

Pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers can get more information and support from their doctor's office, hospitals, health departments, WIC and organizations such as La Leche League.

For more information, go to the La Leche League website at www.llusa.org or call the Arkansas Department of Health Breastfeeding Helpline at 1-800-445-6175 or visit their website at www.healthyarkansas.com/breastfeeding

**Source: Sandra Jones, RD, MEd, BCLC
WIC State Breastfeeding Coordinator**





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ConnectCare Helpline can:

- Assign or change your doctor
- Refer you for help if we cannot help you
- Tell you if your Medicaid is still active

DENTAL PROGRAM

Call 1-800-322-5580
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ConnectCare Dental Program can help:

- Find a Medicaid dentist in your area
- Schedule dental appointments
- Assist with transportation (Medicaid and ARKids First A only)
- Remind you of appointments
- Reschedule missed appointments

Ask the Expert:



Can I smoke cigarettes when I have kids in the car with me?

No. A law (Act 811 of 2011) was passed that went into effect in July 2012 that protects children under the age of 14 from secondhand smoke while in a car. The law makes smoking in a car with children under 14 a primary offense. This means police can pull over and ticket drivers if they are seen smoking in a vehicle with a child. Drivers stopped for this reason for the first time must either pay a \$25 fine or prove they are currently in a program to help them quit smoking.

Secondhand smoke is very dangerous to children. Children who breathe even small amounts of secondhand smoke can become sick or their lungs may not develop normally. It may make ear infections last longer and cause breathing problems. There is no safe level of contact with secondhand smoke for children.

If you need help to quit smoking call the Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669)