



## **TUBERCULOSIS QUESTIONS**

1. Has your child been exposed to a person with known or suspected tuberculosis?
2. Has your child lived in a high-risk area such as Asia, Africa, the Middle East, or Latin America?
3. Does your child have contact with a person who regularly visits a high-TB-risk country?
4. Does your child have contact with institutionalized persons, HIV-infected people, or drug users?

## **HEALTH HABITS**

Children should eat a well-balanced diet and have breakfast before going to school. Avoid excess pop, candy, chips, and other junk foods. If your child needs a snack, encourage fruits and vegetables for nibbling and water between meals. Children should get a minimum of three servings of calcium daily and at least 5 serving of fruits or vegetables. Habits children develop at this age will affect their eating habits the rest of their life, so get them off to a good healthy start early. Remember, children imitate their parents, so be sure to set a good example.

At this age, children should be brushing their own teeth regularly. Ideally that should be after every meal, but a minimum of once in the morning and once before bed. Dental visits are recommended every 6 months.

Encourage regular physical activity. Consider community youth and sports and family physical activities. Practice bicycle, skating, and skateboard safety. This is a good age for a child to learn to swim. If your child is involved in organized sports at this age, emphasize learning to play rather than winning.

Limit TV, computer, and video game time to no more than 2 hours daily. Know the content of the programs/games your children watch. We also strongly discourage televisions in a child's bedroom, as this can lead to many problems as the child gets older. Encourage other quiet inside activities instead, such as reading or other hobbies. If possible, obtain a library card for your child.

## **BEHAVIOR**

Establish consistent rules at home with respect to TV, bedtime, helping with the chores, keeping one's room neat, etc. Spend active time with your child, daily if possible, and show interest in his school activities. Praising and encouraging your child's activities will help bolster his self-esteem.

Communication with your child takes work, but an investment of time at this age will pay off in the long run. *Realize the importance of being a parental role model.*

## **SAFETY TIPS**

Accidents are the greatest threat to the life and health of children. More school-age children die of injuries than all other diseases combined. Yet most of these injuries can be prevented! As your child becomes more independent, he can get into more dangerous situations. While children learn fast, they still cannot always judge what is safe. Here are a few hints to help keep your child safe:

### **Prevent Fires and Burns**

- Check your smoke detector (replace the batteries if necessary) and practice a fire escape plan.
- Put plastic covers in unused electrical outlets.
- Keep a fire extinguisher near or in the kitchen.
- Teach your child never to play with matches or lighters.
- Use sunscreen if your child will be outside playing. We recommend an SPF of at least 30.

### **Prevent Drowning**

Your child should be continuously supervised by a responsible adult when in or around water. Even if he knows how to swim, he is not safe alone in the water. Never let your child swim in canals or any fast-moving water.

### **Firearm Safety**

Keep guns locked, unloaded, and ammunition stored separately.

### **Passive Smoke Exposure**

We also caution against passive smoke exposure of any kind. Our recommendation for the health of your child is no smoking. The more smoke your child is exposed to, the higher her chance of developing more colds, lung infections, ear infections, allergies, asthma problems, and cancer. The best thing for your child's health is for you not to smoke at all. Even if you don't smoke near your child, chemicals from smoking stay with you on your clothes and on your body. If you must smoke, smoke outside the house, and remove your coat or jacket when you come back in. Never smoke inside or in the car. Even if your child is in another room or not in the car at the moment, she will still be exposed to lingering, harmful chemicals later.

### **Sports Safety**

Be sure your child wears all the protective equipment made for the sport she plays, such as shin pads, helmets, or mouth guards.

### **Vehicle Safety**

Pennsylvania state law states that children *must* be secured in a seat-belt system and an appropriately fitting child booster seat until at least their 8th birthday. Everyone in the car should always be restrained

in some manner. For more advice and information, you can call the Pennsylvania car seat question line phone number at 1-800-CAR-BELT.

You can also see the Doctor's Note on our web site: <http://bit.ly/KPPCarSeat2>

We *do not* advise buying motorized vehicles for children. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends against the use of all-terrain vehicles by children less than 16 years old.

Supervise street crossings. Your child may start to look in both directions before crossing, but don't depend on his ability to cross a street alone yet. Start teaching them to STOP..LOOK..and LISTEN!

### **Trampolines**

The recreational use of trampolines is not recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics or Kids Plus. For more information, see the Doctor's Note on our website: <http://bit.ly/KPTrampoline>

### **Stranger Safety**

Your child should know and spell her full name, address, and telephone number. Teach your child how to contact you during the daytime (how to call work or home). Teach your child the first and last names of family members, and never to go anywhere with a stranger. Teach your child never to go anywhere with a stranger, never to accept food from strangers, and never to accept touching she doesn't like. Teach your child to be careful around strange dogs, and not to bother any dog while the animal is eating.

### **Bike Safety**

Don't let your child ride a bicycle near traffic. At this age, children should not be riding at dusk or after dark. Bring the bike in when the sun starts to set. Have your child wear a bicycle helmet while riding a bicycle.

## **WALK-IN HOURS**

We offer no-appointment necessary Walk-In Hours, at all offices:

**Weekday Mornings, 8:15 to 9:30am** at Pleasant Hills and Squirrel Hill/Greenfield

**Weekday Evenings, 6:30pm to 8:00pm**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday at Pleasant Hills

Monday and Thursday at Squirrel Hill/Greenfield.

**All Day, Every Week Day** at Cranberry/Seven Fields

These hours are to address routine health problems such as sore throat, cold symptoms, fever, rash, and ear pain. They are not designed to evaluate chronic problems. If your child is older than 4 months and has had symptoms fewer than 3 days, you can be seen on a first-come, first-served basis.

You can read more about Walk-In Hours on our Kids Plus web site, [www.kidspluspgh.com](http://www.kidspluspgh.com).

## QUESTIONS & CONCERNS

If you feel you need additional advice between regular check-ups, you can post questions to our Facebook page or telephone us during office hours. Facebook, where we answer questions sometimes as quickly as in a few minutes, is a great place to ask about general, non-pressing issues. (You can also check the Doctor's Notes library on our web site, which features well over one hundred different topics covered by our Kids Plus Providers.) For more detailed and pressing health questions, it's best to call. Either way, we're always happy to provide counseling and guidance. It's both our job and our pleasure!

When calling after office hours, your call will be answered by an answering machine. If you have a concern that can't wait for regular office hours, please leave your name, your child's name (with spelling), and your phone number, and we'll return your call usually within an hour or so. If you have an emergency that requires an ambulance or paramedics, call 911 *first*. If you have an emergency that can't wait for a call back and need to have the doctor urgently paged (such as seizures, respiratory illness with labored breathing, suspected dehydration, or similar conditions), the recorded message will give you the answering service's phone number, and they can reach the doctor on call for the emergency.

## AND REMEMBER...

We have a wonderful, 24/7/365 resource for parents at our **Kids Plus Facebook Page**. Like us on Facebook, and follow along with our great Kids Plus Social Media Community!

You can access the **Kids Plus Patient Portal 24/7/365** on your computer, tablet, or smart phone. No matter where you are, you can always see and print many of your child's medical records, including growth charts, immunization records, prescriptions, lab results, and visit notes. It's like having a Kids Plus virtual office right at your fingertips.

*We look forward to seeing you next year!*

