

Health and Wellness: 7 to 11 Years

Development

- All aspects of your child's development (physical, social and mental skills) will continue to grow.
- Your child may have questions or concerns about puberty.
- Your child may want to participate in new activities at school or join community education activities (such as soccer) or organized groups (such as Girl Scouts).
- Friendships will become more important. Peer pressure may begin.
- Set up a routine for talking about school and doing homework.
- Limit your child to 1 to 2 hours of quality screen time each day, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. Screen time includes television, video game and computer use. Watch TV with your child and supervise Internet use.
- Spend at least 15 minutes a day reading to or reading with your child.
- Teach your child respect for property and other people.
- Give your child opportunities for independence within set boundaries.

Diet

- Children ages 9 to 12 need 2,000 calories each day.
- Between ages 9 to 12 years, your child's bones are growing their fastest. To help build strong and healthy bones, your child needs 1,300 milligrams (mg) of calcium each day. He or she can get this requirement by drinking 3 cups of low-fat or fat-free milk, plus servings of other foods high in calcium (such as yogurt, cheese, orange juice with added calcium, broccoli and almonds).
- Until age 8 your child needs 10 mg of iron each day. Between ages 9 and 13, your child needs 8 mg of iron a day. Lean beef, iron-fortified cereal, oatmeal, soybeans, spinach and tofu are good sources of iron.

Your child's growth:

Weight: ____ lbs. ____ oz. (____ percent)

Height: ____ in. (____ percent)

Blood pressure: ____ mm Hg

BMI: ____ percent

- Help your child choose fiber-rich fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Choose and prepare foods and beverages with little added sugars or sweeteners.
- Offer your child healthful snacks such as fruits, vegetables, healthful cereals, yogurt, pudding, turkey, peanut butter sandwich, fruit smoothie, or cheese. Avoid foods high in sugar or fat.
- Let your child help select good choices at the grocery store, help plan and prepare meals, and help clean up. Always supervise any kitchen activity.
- Limit soft drinks and sweetened beverages (including juice) to no more than one a day. Limit sweets, treats and snack foods (such as chips), fast foods and fried foods.

Exercise

- The American Heart Association recommends children get 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day. This time can be divided into chunks: 30 minutes physical education in school, 10 minutes playing catch, and a 20-minute family walk.
- In addition to helping build strong bones and muscles, regular exercise can reduce risks of certain diseases, reduce stress levels, increase self-esteem, help maintain a healthy weight, improve concentration, and help maintain good cholesterol levels.
- Be sure your child wears the right safety gear for his or her activities, such as a helmet, mouth guard, knee pads, eye protection or life vest.
- Check bicycles and other sports equipment regularly for needed repairs.



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Sleep

- Children ages 7 to 11 need at least 9 hours of sleep each night on a regular basis.
- Help your child get into a sleep routine: washing his or her face, brushing teeth, etc.
- Set a regular time to go to bed and wake up at the same time each day. Teach your child to get up when called or when the alarm goes off.
- Avoid regular exercise, heavy meals and caffeine right before bed.
- Avoid noise and bright rooms.

Safety

- When riding in a car, your child needs to be buckled in the back seat. (He or she may still need a booster seat.) Be sure all other adults and children are buckled as well.
- Do not let anyone smoke in your home or around your child.
- Practice home fire drills and fire safety.
- Supervise your child when he or she plays outside. Teach your child what to do if a stranger comes up to him or her. Warn your child never to go with a stranger or accept anything from a stranger. Teach your child to say “NO” and tell an adult he or she trusts.
- Enroll your child in swimming lessons, if appropriate. Teach your child water safety. Make sure your child is always supervised and wears a life jacket whenever around a lake or river.
- Teach your child animal safety.
- Teach your child how to dial and use 911.
- Keep all guns out of your child’s reach. Keep guns and ammunition locked up in different parts of the house.

Self-esteem

- Provide support, attention and enthusiasm for your child’s abilities, achievements and friends.
- Support your child’s school activities.
- Let your child try new skills (such as school or community activities).
- Have a reward system with consistent expectations. Do not use food as a reward.

Discipline

- Teach your child consequences for unacceptable or inappropriate behavior. Talk about your family’s values and morals and what is right and wrong.
- Use discipline to teach, not punish. Be fair and consistent with discipline.

Dental Care

- The second set of molars comes in between ages 11 and 14. Ask the dentist about sealants, plastic coatings applied on the chewing surfaces of the back molars.
- Make regular dental appointments for cleanings and checkups. (Your child may need fluoride tablets if you have well water.)

Eye Care

- Make eye checkups at least every two years. A simple eye test will be part of the regular well checkups.

Immunizations (Shots) Today

Your child may receive these shots at this time:

- Tdap (tetanus +diphtheria toxoids and acellular pertussis vaccine, adolescent/adult): ages 11 to 12 years
- MCV4 (meningococcal conjugate vaccine, quadrivalent): ages 11 to 12 years
- HPV4 (human papillomavirus vaccine; three-dose series): ages 11 to 12 years
- influenza.

Talk with your health care provider for information on giving acetaminophen (Tylenol®) after your child’s immunizations.

Your Child’s Next Well Checkup

The Minnesota Department of Health recommends yearly well child checkups through age 18.

Your child may need a shot for:

- influenza.