

Health Check

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Kelsey-Seybold pediatrician offers 6 back-to-school health tips during COVID-19

Back-to-school time is finally here. However, the projected learning experience – whether in-attendance or virtual – is sure to be different from what we’ve known.

Depending on your school or school district’s guidelines, 2020 could involve home-based learning, masks and social-distancing in classrooms, or a combination of teaching protocols.

Whatever your situation, please consider my suggestions to help your kids stay well:

1. **Get them the seasonal flu shot.** Children six months and older can get the flu vaccine each year. This is especially important for children with asthma, diabetes, weakened immune systems, or obesity.
2. **Keep them home if they’re sick.** Kids should be kept home if feeling unwell. Be on alert if your child exhibits a severe cough or a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, in which case you should consult a pediatrician without delay.
3. **Teach them to wash their hands properly.** They should lather up for 20 seconds. (Have them sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice while washing.)
4. **Explain “social distancing.”** If returning to a classroom, demonstrate how they can judge a 6-foot measurement and encourage them to stay that distance from other students. (Kids can still manage to socialize while maintaining a 6-foot distance.)
5. **Let them play outside.** Children between 6 and 17 years should get at least an hour of moderate- to vigorous activity every day. Aerobic and muscle-strengthening exercises, combined with a warm-up and stretching routine, can improve fitness and help strengthen resistance to illnesses.
6. **Be prepared to address possible psychological issues.** For some children and adolescents, the endless cycle of telecasts with images of overcrowded intensive care units and civil unrest in cities may impact their emotional health. One thing parents and caregivers can do is to stay calm. Children look to us for guidance. Be a strong, stable role model. Monitor television viewing and social media. And remember what Abraham Lincoln said during a crisis: “And this, too, shall pass.”



By **JESSICA LANERIE, M.D.**
Associate Chief of Pediatrics –
Kelsey-Seybold Clinic

*Dr. Lanerie is a board-certified pediatrician caring for young patients at **Sienna Plantation Clinic**, 7010 Highway 6 in Missouri City.*



Pediatric Video Visits

Parents can schedule pediatric Video Visits for their children.

If your child or adolescent has a respiratory infection or been exposed to COVID-19, call **713-442-0000** to schedule a Video Visit from home.