



Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

simcoe muskoka
DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT

15 Sperling Drive,
Barrie, ON L4M 6K9

Your Health Connection



Health MATTERS

February 2008

Staying smoke free beyond your New Year's resolution

Congratulations! Quitting smoking is the best New Year's resolution you could have made for yourself. Your health is starting to improve, food tastes better, and people are noticing the change that you have made.

The trick now is sticking to your resolution to stay smoke free. Remember quitting is a process that takes practice and support. It will take some hard work and commitment on your part to become a non-smoker, but you can do it!

Most relapses occur within the first three months of quitting, so it is important to revisit your quit plan and update it as necessary. Continue using the strategies that are working well for you, and try some new ones in difficult situations. Most importantly, remember why you decided to quit smoking. Write that reason down and put it where you will see it often.

Even after you have kicked the physical addiction to cigarettes, certain situations may continue to trigger the urge to smoke. Stressful situations are the most common triggers, and ensuring you have good strategies to cope with these situations will help you to fight the urge. The cravings you get will usually only last as long as it would have taken to smoke a cigarette. Start with using positive self-talk and reminding yourself that if you refocus your attention to something else, the craving will pass.

If you are using nicotine replacement therapy to help with withdrawal symptoms, be sure to continue using it until you feel confident that you have been able to change most of the behaviours you would normally associate with smoking. Every day you live smoke free is teaching you how to become a non-smoker for life. Remember to ask for support from family and friends when you need it.

- ▶ Feeding tips for preschoolers 2
- ▶ Is your child warm enough 3
- ▶ Time to get the lead out..... 4



The 4 Ds

- 1. Deep Breathing**
Take a few deep breaths, exhale slowly and feel the tension leave your body.
- 2. Delay**
Pay attention to your self-talk. Remind yourself why you are quitting smoking and delay having a cigarette until the craving passes.
- 3. Drink Water**
Drinking lots of water will help you to get through the craving, and improve your overall health.
- 4. Do Something Else**
Keep your hands busy, call a friend or loved one, or do something physical. Exercise is a great way to work through cravings.

For further support or information contact the Smoker's Helpline at 1-877-513-5333 or Your Health Connection at 1-877-721-7520. There's lots of helpful advice on quitting at our website www.simcoemuskokahealth.org.

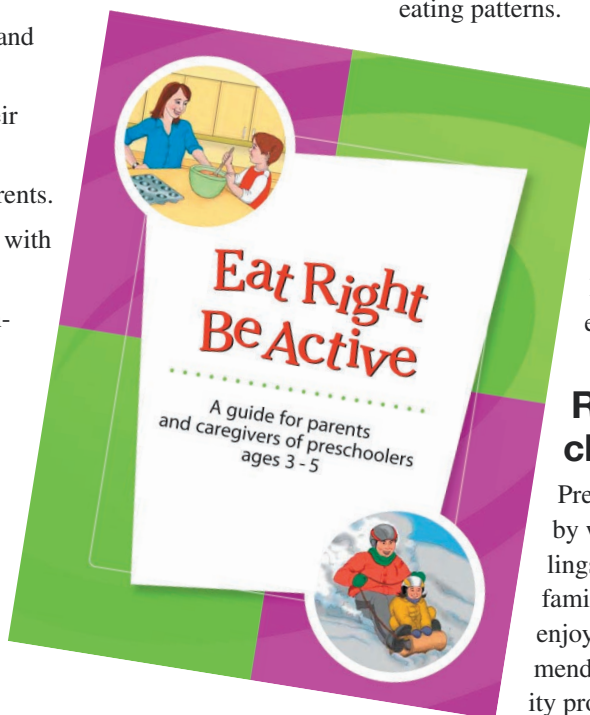


Feeding tips for preschool kids

When it comes to healthy eating and weight, parents get lots of information about what is best. Yet parents may have pre-schoolers with challenging food preferences and eating rituals.

Your pre-schooler is likely to have developed some recognizable eating skills by now.

- Pre-schoolers now use a fork and spoon as well as a cup.
- They're not as messy as in their toddler years.
- They will test limits set by parents.
- They can learn to eat together with family.
- They may resort to temper tantrums if they do not get their way.
- They like to be helpful with chores like peeling oranges or mashing bananas.
- They want to please their parents and/or caregivers.



If parents allow their children to snack between meals it may decrease a child's appetite at mealtime. This distresses parents who like to see a child eat everything on their plate at family mealtimes. Given the opportunity to decide when to eat and when to stop eating, however, children will eat as much as their bodies require. Letting them decide when to stop eating is an important part of teaching them to listen to their bodies for developing healthy eating patterns.

Children seem to prefer foods that are high in sugar and fat. Actually, it is often how these foods are offered to a child that influences their preferences. They will learn to crave foods that are served as a reward. On the other hand, bribing or forcing children to choose healthy foods can have a long-term negative effect on their preferences for these foods.

Role modelling and the childcare environment

Preschool children learn about food and food habits by watching their parents, caregivers, peers and siblings – and increasingly, television. If the rest of the family enjoys healthy foods, they are more likely to enjoy healthy foods too. Many paediatricians recommend limiting TV viewing to one or two hours of quality programming per day to reduce its influence on food habits.

Healthy growth—follow their lead

Children's appetites go through ups and downs. It's normal for your child's rate of growth to be relatively slow after the first birthday. Appetites are also small. Before a growth spurt, pre-schoolers will tend to eat more, and then ease off after a week's time.

Positive feeding relationship

Here's a helpful way to think of your role with your child when it comes to feeding.

- Parents and caregivers manage what they offer children to eat and the environment in which they serve food.
- Children are responsible for how much they eat or even whether they eat a particular meal or snack.

If this feeding relationship is respected, then feeding and potential weight problems can be prevented. The best strategy is to encourage healthy food choices and habits in a positive, nurturing environment.

You can find plenty of reliable information on the Internet about children's nutrition and encouraging good eating habits. Check some of these websites.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide—www.hc-sc.gc.ca
Look for the food guide link on the right side of the page.

Eat Right Be Active—www.eatrightontario.ca
Look for the Eat Right Be Active link on the right hand side of the page.

Busy Bodies—www.eatrightontario.ca
Click on the Eat Right, Be Active link on the right and then look for the link to the Busy Bodies Activity Card.

For more information on how or what to feed preschool children, please call Your Health Connection at 721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520.



Is your child warm enough?

Cold weather, ice and snow bring an opportunity for families to go tobogganing, skating, skiing and to build snowmen.

Your children will get the most fun out of these activities if they are dressed appropriately for the cold and wet weather. Follow these tips to make sure your child is ready for winter weather conditions.



- Layer your child’s clothing (e.g. undershirt, t-shirt, sweater, coat). This provides more warmth than one single heavy article of clothing. This way if the child is too warm he will be able to remove one layer at a time.
- Always make sure your child is wearing a hat and their ears are well covered. Children lose most of their body heat from their heads, and exposed ears are prone to frostbite.
- Have your child wear mittens rather than gloves—they tend to keep small fingers and hands warmer.
- Cover as much of your child’s skin as you can with turtlenecks, neck warmers, etc. to prevent frostbite.
- Try and dress your child in waterproof clothing and footwear when possible.
- Remove all wet clothing and footwear immediately.
- Take frequent breaks inside for warm drinks and snacks.
- Go and play outside with your children. This allows you to supervise your kids to be sure that they are safe and enjoy time together.
- Lead by example—wear appropriate winter clothing yourself.
- Remember, in all your efforts to keep your child warm enough, be careful not to overdress him. Overdressing can cause sweating and or heat rash. If your child is dressed properly according to the outside temperature, his neck will be warm but not sweaty, and his hands may still feel cool to touch.

Getting involved with your children’s outdoor activities is a great way to get some much needed physical activity during the cold winter months. For more information about keeping your children healthy visit these websites.

www.caringforkids.cps.ca – prepared by the Canadian Paediatric Society.

www.aboutkidshealth.ca – from the Hospital for Sick Children.

Practical Tips On Car Seats In Winter

- No matter the season, children always need to be secured in their car seats snugly – that means no slack in the harness. No more than one finger should be able to fit between the shoulder harness and the child’s body.
- Bulky snow suits and winter coats change the way a child fits into the car seat. In a crash this bulky material compresses, making the straps too loose and possibly allowing the child to be ejected from the seat. Extra care needs to be taken to make sure the harness straps are snug and protecting the baby...not the snowsuit.
- Newborns/infants are of special concern because of their small size. They should be dressed in lighter weight clothing (i.e. polar fleece) that still provides warmth and makes it easier to get a snug harness fit at the shoulders and crotch. Make sure the chest clip is placed at armpit level to keep the shoulder straps in position. A blanket can then be placed over the infant and the car seat for protection from the cold.
- As toddlers become more mobile, the reality is they will likely be wearing snowsuits. It is best to remove the coat and adjust the harness system snugly. You can always put the child's coat on backwards over their arms to keep them warm without compromising safety.
- Extra caution needs to be taken for those children who do wear winter coats, to be sure that the harness or seat belt (for booster seats) is positioned properly and snug.



It's time to get the lead out

Lead occurs naturally in small amounts in the environment and is used in industries. Lead that enters the body, even in small amounts, can be hazardous to human health.



Lead has no obvious taste or smell. If ingested, it travels in the blood and can be absorbed by soft tissue such as organs. If lead is not eliminated as waste then it is stored in bones and teeth. It can stay there for decades but can be released back into the blood by serious illness and injury, or during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Who is at the greatest risk?

During pregnancy, lead can affect the health, growth and development of the unborn child. Lead is also a serious hazard for young children because even low-level exposure may harm brain development and behaviour.

What can we do to reduce exposure?

Lead may be present in dust, paint, water and soil, where it could be accidentally breathed in or swallowed. It may also be present in toys and other products. Regulations control lead concentrations in gasoline and house paints. Regulatory agencies also order cleanups of contaminated sites. However, lead can still be found in some places around the home:

- flakes or dust from old, lead-based paint
- contaminated soil
- old water pipes
- other household items.

Paint and dust

If you are planning renovations in an older home, learn the potential sources of lead exposure, such as dust or paint, and protect yourself by wearing approved masks, coveralls and gloves. Keep the area

sealed off and properly ventilated. Thoroughly vacuum and damp-mop areas for dust every day and once renovations are complete. Do not let children help you with cleanup. Pregnant women should also avoid the work area. Any lead in the soil around a house can remain for decades. If you have lead in the soil, plant grass over the area and put gardens and play areas away from sources of lead. Remove shoes at the door.

Drinking Water

Lead in drinking water can come from sources such as lead plumbing or connections, lead-containing solder and brass fittings including valves and faucets. Older homes or buildings are more likely to have lead connections. Homes built before 1952 are of particular concern.

By running the tap for several minutes until cold, you can flush out stagnant water that may have absorbed lead from solder. NSF 53-certified filters are designed to reduce lead. Replacement of part or all of the plumbing system is another option. If you have concerns, contact your local municipality to ask about getting your tap water tested.

Household items

Look closely at what you buy. Check warning labels and review consumer advisories at Health Canada's website, www.hc-sc.gc.ca.

Some consumer goods causing concern are:

- imported canned food, plastic or ceramic dishes, toys
- some glazes on pottery dishes
- lead crystal
- the wicks of some low-quality candles
- some costume and children's jewellery—if in doubt about contents, do not use
- some older inexpensive, non-glossy PVC mini-blinds
- some folk remedies
- hobby materials such as oil painting and stained glass—ensure proper use, storage and ventilation.

For more information, call Your Health Connection at 721-7520 (1-877-721-7520) or visit our website www.simcomuskokahealth.org.

