



HEALTH NEWS

Health Information For Students and Their Families

Welcome to the Fall edition of our School Health Newsletter! As we settle into this cooler season, it's crucial to prioritize our health and well-being. In this issue, we've packed valuable information so please take the time to read through the articles and consider how you can incorporate these tips into your daily lives. Remember your nurse is always here to support your health needs. Feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns. Stay healthy and safe from all your Y.A.L.E. nurses!

CDC RECOMMENDS ANNUAL FLU VACCINATION WITH ANY LICENSED, AGE-APPROPRIATE FLU VACCINE AND THE NEW OMICRON BOOSTER FOR EVERYONE 6 MONTHS AND OLDER.

Are You Planning For Your Flu Shot?

As your school nurse, I want to make sure you stay healthy throughout the school year. One important way to protect yourself and those around you from the flu is by getting a flu vaccine.

By getting vaccinated, you also help prevent the spread of flu to others, especially those who are more vulnerable, like the elderly and those with weakened immune systems. These high risk groups should definitely get vaccinated.

The best time to get the flu vaccine is in the early fall, before flu season begins. However, it's better to get vaccinated late than never. The vaccine can still be beneficial if received later in the season.

Vaccination is the best way to reduce your risk for seasonal flu.

However, vaccination isn't about not getting infected, but rather the reducing of hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations and tens of thousands of deaths that occur each year in the United States alone. In addition, you should also practice good health habits such as making sure you get enough rest, stay physically active, reduce stress, drink plenty of fluids, and wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth and cover your cough or sneeze because flu virus spreads by these droplets.

Remember, keep an eye on your child's health and check for symptoms of illness every morning. When sick, keep your child home and check with the school nurse for guidance. Avoid close contact with others to keep them from getting sick too.

For more resources go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/actions-prevent-flu.htm>



Let's Get Active!

Being active means different things to each of us. For some people, being active means playing team sports or exercising every day. For other people being active means just making sure they get up and leave the house regularly. There is no real right or wrong way to live an active healthy life. The key is finding balance in what YOU want and need to accomplish each day, week, or year. If you keep a mindset that you NEED to be active in order to be healthy and set a routine with goals it can be easier.



While physical activity is crucial for overall health and well-being, children and adolescents should get at least 30-60 minutes of physical activity most days. Aim for moderate to vigorous activities that bring on a light sweat after about 10 minutes of activity, while being able to carry on a conversation.

Autism-related barriers to physical activity can be avoided if shorter periods of physical activity are spaced throughout the day. Remember to keep the activity enjoyable and make it part of a routine. A visual schedule can help. Be a health role model by being active with your child. Whether you engage in family walks or a game of catch, social interaction is a valuable tool.

For more information check out the Nemours site <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/exercise-wise.html> and <https://www.autismspeaks.org/expert-opinion/autism-exercise-benefits>

How much exercise do YOU get?

Try keeping a log for an activity like walking and track the amount of time you are active each day. At the end of the week, add up the minutes. Did you meet your goal? Maybe next week you can try to do a little more!

Cookies for Breakfast

Kids with autism can be picky eaters whether due to taste and texture aversions or limited food preferences. Here is a recipe I found by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics that may be more accepted while helping to increase nutrient intake for your family.

Ingredients

3 bananas, peeled
 ¼ cup coconut oil melted
 1 tbsp maple syrup
 1 tsp vanilla extract
 1 ½ cups rolled oats
 1 tbsp golden flax meal
 ½ tsp salt
 ¼ cup mini chocolate chips



Directions

Wash your hands (See post about hand washing). Preheat oven to 350°F. Place bananas in a medium bowl and mash well. Add remaining ingredients to mashed banana; stir well.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Press 2 tablespoons mixture into a 2 ½-inch cookie cutter. Remove cutter to create a round shape. Repeat with remaining mixture.

Bake for 22 to 25 minutes or until cookies are golden and set. Allow to cool before serving.

Nutrition Information

Serving Size: 1 cookie ————— Serves 14

Calories: 112, Total Fat: 6g; Saturated Fat: 4g; Cholesterol: 0g; Sodium: 84mg; Total Carbohydrate: 15g; Dietary Fiber: 2g; Protein: 2g; Potassium 147mg; Phosphorus 59mg.

For more healthy meal ideas check out:

<https://www.eatright.org/recipes/>

Sleep Goals

Ensure your child gets enough sleep each night. A consistent sleep schedule is vital for academic success and overall health. Most school-age children need between 9-11 hours of sleep per night.



Trouble sleeping? A consistent bedtime and wake up time is important. Keep a routine with a visual chart if needed. Avoid large meals and caffeine a few hours before bedtime. Exposure to sunlight and physical activity every day will help regulate your sleep cycle. But also avoid long afternoon naps.

Stop using electronics such as iPads and TVs about an hour before bed. Keep the bedroom quiet and dark with a small nightlight if necessary to avoid triggers. Make sure your child's pillow, sheets and blanket are not irritating them. Also, be aware that while weighted blankets are marketed as providing the warmth and coziness all night there isn't enough evidence to back their claims for improved sleep.

For more sleep strategies:

<https://www.thensf.org/back-to-school-sleep-tips/>

Did You Know?

Children who get 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day are more likely to get the nutrients they need.

How To Wash Your Hands

1. Wet your hands with water applying enough soap to cover both hands.
2. Rub your hands together paying attention to the back of hands and in between your fingers.
3. Rub the back of your fingers and the tips of your fingers on the palm of the opposite hand.
4. After at least 20 seconds (sing Happy Birthday twice), rinse your hands with water.
5. Dry your hands completely with a disposable towel and use it to turn off the faucet.



NURSE SPOTLIGHT



I am thrilled to continue serving as your school nurse this year at Y.A.L.E. Southeast. My name is Joanne Mintzas, and I am here to support the health and well-being of all Y.A.L.E. students. I have a BS in Foods and Nutrition, a BS in Nursing, and a MS in management while currently completing graduate coursework in school nursing. I have previous experience as a dementia nurse, a mental health nurse, and in IDD care management. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any health-related questions or concerns you may have. I am available during school hours and can be reached at: 856-848-0007 ext.401 e-mail: jmintzas@yaleschoolnj.com

