

Pavilion Pediatrics Winter Newsletter

Winter 2020



An Update on Flu

Happy New Year Pavilion families! We hope your holidays were filled with fun time with family and friends and not too much in the way of winter illness. In our last newsletter, we reviewed the best ways to prevent getting the flu, and now it seems, we're talking a lot about managing the symptoms of the flu. As you may have heard, this year we're seeing a lot of flu, both locally and nationally. Nevertheless, though the flu vaccine is never 100% effective, it is always worth getting, as it does provide protection even if you end up getting the flu. A recent study in the journal *Clinical Infectious Diseases* found that children who had been vaccinated against the flu had a 54% decreased likelihood of being hospitalized with the flu than their unvaccinated peers. We know it can feel demoralizing when the shot that your child gave you so much grief about getting doesn't ultimately prevent him or her from getting the flu, but all is not lost, as it does decrease the severity and duration of illness. Remember if you suspect your child has flu, please do come into the office for testing, ideally within the first 24-48 hours of symptoms, so that we can decide if antiviral medications may be helpful or indicated. Symptoms of flu include fever, sore throat, chills, and cough. As always, don't hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or concerns.

Antibiotics and Obesity?

There are many good reasons to be mindful about the judicious use of antibiotics. For example, every antibiotic has potentially harmful side effects such as abdominal upset, diarrhea, allergic reactions, etc...Additionally, we providers, as the prescribers of antibiotics, need to be mindful of the repercussions of prescribing antibiotics too often, as each interaction between bacteria and antibiotic lends an opportunity for the bacteria to develop resistance to the antibiotic, making these important medications less effective in the future. Think of it in sports terms, it's like a unique scouting opportunity for the opponent every time we prescribe an antibiotic. This concern over developing resistance is true on the individual level as well as on the community level. And we are indeed starting to see more and more examples of resistant bacteria develop that are not susceptible to antibiotics. In fact, scientists are having to look at completely novel models of fighting bacteria due to the increasing resistance to antibiotic methods.

Now, there appears to be reason to sound another note of caution when thinking about prescribing antibiotics: two studies done in pediatric populations, found an increased risk of obesity in young children prescribed ten or more rounds of antibiotics prior to age four. These children were 2.5 times more likely to be obese compared to their peers who had not received as many antibiotics. Of course, many factors may play into this association, and more studies are needed to establish any causal relationship. Nonetheless, the prevailing theory of the association is that antibiotics disturb the gut microbiome or flora which play a key role in processing nutrients from foods.

As you seek care for your child and yourself, keep in mind that a recent study in the British Medical Journal found that up to 40% of antibiotics prescribed in the US were either done inappropriately or without proper indication. So the next time you are prescribed an antibiotic in our office or another office, such as urgent care, consider reviewing the need for the antibiotic with the provider. There are many cases where antibiotics are absolutely needed such as in the treatment of strep throat, urinary tract infections, and some skin infections. However, there are many cases of prolonged viral symptoms, and even ear infections that do not actually need antibiotics. Any provider should be happy to discuss the necessity or lack thereof in choosing antibiotics.

Screen Time and Toddlers



We all seem to struggle with figuring out how much screen time is appropriate for our kids. Those of you with toddlers have probably already noticed that their facility with screens at such a young age is astounding. There is good reason, however, to set limits on kids' screen time as young as 2-3 years of age. A recent study in the Lancet Child and Adolescent Health demonstrated that preschool-age children who spent more time on screens were more likely to be less physically active years later. "Compared to an hour or less of screen time daily at ages 2-3," according to the study, "spending three hours or more with electronic devices during this developmental period was associated with lower likelihood at ages 5-6 of engaging in regular light physical activity or moderate-to-vigorous physical activity." It's worth remembering that it's not just what they or we are doing while we're on screens, but also what we're not doing, like spending time together, playing outdoors, exercising, reading a book, etc...

Locker Room Talk

Another interesting study recently looked at the effectiveness of middle school athletic coaches taking on a topic rarely discussed on the sports field: appropriate behavior in social or dating relationships, in particular, boys' attitudes and behavior towards girls during the adolescent years. The study found that coaches who teach young male athletes about respectful relationship behaviors may be able to help prevent dating violence and aggressive behavior toward female peers. The research examined the effectiveness of a program, "Coaching Boys Into Men" that seeks to prevent

dating violence and sexual assault by asking coaches to speak frankly with middle-school male athletes about how they should - and should not - treat their female peers. After one year of the program, athletes at schools that implemented the program were more than twice as likely to intervene when a peer is disrespectful to others, as well as identify and support socially appropriate behaviors.

In The News: Wuhan Virus

A novel respiratory virus, called the Wuhan virus as it was first detected in Wuhan, the capital city of the Hubei province of China, has led to travel bans to and from mainland China. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, the novel coronavirus, so called due to its crown-like appearance, is not a public health emergency in the United States at present. Stay tuned as the CDC continues to monitor and prepare for potential spread. If you suspect you or your child has been exposed to someone who has respiratory symptoms and traveled to or from China, please contact us and the CDC prior to presenting to our office or any medical establishment, as there are specific guidelines for testing and containing potential spread. As always, feel free to contact us with questions.

Thank You!

We at Pavilion Pediatrics want to thank you for sending us photos of you and your children over the holidays. You'll find us during these winter months smiling ear to ear as we open the envelopes bearing your photos. When you come to the office, you will find the photos hanging in the waiting room, in the hallways, and in the exam rooms. Thank you for helping us decorate our office with images of the best part of our job: taking care of your families. Please do not feel any pressure or obligation to send photos (most of us hardly get around to sending out our own), but if you have a photo you would like to send, please do so. We'll proudly display. . [Read more on our website](#) ©

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