

Your 5- to 6-Year-Old Child

Diet

- Choose healthy foods for your child at meals and snacks. Try to emphasize fruits, vegetables and whole grains, and to eat meals as a family. Picky eaters sometimes get interested in new foods if they help in the kitchen.
- Limit fast foods, junk foods and sweets. Avoid sticky fruit snacks, sport drinks, and soda. Limit juice to 4–6 ounces per day.
- Your child should drink 16–20 ounces of skim or low-fat milk each day. If your child is not a milk drinker, include other foods which contain calcium (yogurt, cheese, soy or almond milk, tofu, kale, broccoli).
- Breakfast is very important. Research shows that eating breakfast improves school performance.
- Multivitamins may be recommended if your child's diet seems consistently inadequate.

Elimination

- At 5 years of age, bedwetting is normal. After age 6, it is still normal, but treatment options may be considered.
- If stools are infrequent, hard or painful, let us know. We may suggest dietary measures and/or a stool softener.

Sleep

- A regular bedtime routine is very important to children. Between 5–6 years of age, the average child sleeps 10–11 hours.
- Nighttime fears and nightmares are common problems. Offer reassurance.

Development

Most 5-year-olds can hop, skip and balance on one foot, tie a knot, draw a person with at least six body parts, print some letters and numbers, tell a story with full sentences, use appropriate tenses, follow directions and listen well.

Safety

- Children under 8 years of age and/or under 4'9" must be secured in a booster seat. Always read the manufacturer's instructions for use. Note the weight limits and use an appropriate size for your child.
- Children should always ride in the back seat, until age 13.
- If you own a gun, store it unloaded and locked in a separate location from ammunition (which should also be locked).
- Secure blind cords.
- Teach your child the dangers of cars in the street, and continue to supervise your child when near a street.
- Use sunscreen with SPF greater than 30, and a hat and sunglasses.
- This is the age to encourage organized swimming lessons, but be aware that knowing how to swim does not ensure safety. No diving in unfamiliar water.
- Use a properly-fitted bicycle helmet and protective gear whenever on wheels (bicycle, scooter, roller blades).
- Use appropriate protective equipment during all sports — helmet, mouth guard and shatterproof eye gear.
- Keep matches and lighters away from children. Never allow your child to play with fireworks, firecrackers or sparklers.
- Develop a fire escape plan for your home and practice it.
- By age 5, your child should know his full name, address, a phone number where he can always reach you, and how to call 911.
- Discuss stranger safety, playground safety and sports safety. Role play about the dangers of strangers with your child.
- In case of accidental ingestion or poisoning, call the Illinois Poison Control Center at 800.222.1222.

Other things to keep in mind

- Limit the amount of TV and monitor the types of shows your child watches. Limit screen time in general, and avoid violent video games. Set reasonable rules and guidelines for TV and computer use, and make sure you are always able to monitor your child's internet activity.
- Spend quality time with your child every day — read books, encourage hobbies, take an interest in your child's day at school and get to know your child's friends.
- Do not over schedule your child. Too many activities can stress a child and family. Schoolwork may suffer too.
- Children are very curious about their bodies at this age. Answer questions about body parts in a matter-of-fact way, using correct terminology. Teach your child that body parts covered by a bathing suit are private, and that it is never ok for an adult to express interest in private parts or ask a child for help with private parts. (An exception is that medical personnel need to check ALL body parts during annual checkups.)
- Help your child learn about healthy lifestyles, and set a good example with exercise and nutrition.
- Encourage your child's independence and responsibility. Assign simple household chores; help him/her feel he's/she's an essential part of the family.

Fever/Illness

- Fever is a common symptom in children, usually caused by the immune system's response to an infection. Any temperature over 100.4° F is considered a fever. Once you've identified a fever, you can treat it with acetaminophen or ibuprofen to make your child more comfortable. Depending on other symptoms, it may be necessary to come to the office, although most fevers are caused by viruses, and can be managed at home.
- More important than the number on the thermometer is how your child looks and acts. If your child is interactive after receiving fever medicine, that is a good sign.
- Please call our office to report fever that lasts more than 72 hours, or is accompanied by other concerning symptoms (decreased drinking, decreased urine output, labored breathing, or looking very ill).
- Being prepared can help you cope with fever. Keep your thermometer handy, have acetaminophen or ibuprofen (and dosing information) available, and take these with you when travelling.

Prevention

- Schedule dental visits every six months, and have your child brush and floss. You may need to continue to brush your child's teeth at this age.
- This is a good age to have your child's vision tested, even if it seems fine (a problem in one eye can be compensated for by the other eye). Hearing can be checked if you have concerns.
- A good resource for information about vaccines is vaccine.chop.edu/parents.
- A useful website for reliable information about a wide variety of pediatric health topics is healthychildren.org.

At today's check-up

- Your child will have a physical examination. Your questions and concerns will be answered.
- DTaP, polio and MMRV vaccines may be needed. A tuberculosis skin test may be given, depending on risk factors.
- At 5 years of age, a developmental questionnaire will be given for you to complete and mail back to us.

Acetaminophen Dosing Instructions

Every 4–6 hours and no more than 4 doses/day

Weight	Dose	Children's Suspension
36–47 lbs	240 mg	1½ tsp or 7.5 ml
48–59 lbs	320 mg	2 tsp. or 10 mL
60–71 lbs	400 mg	2½ tsp. or 12.5 mL

Ibuprofen Dosing Instructions

Every 6–8 hours

Weight	Dose	Children's Suspension
36–47 lbs	150 mg	1½ tsp. or 7.5 mL
48–59 lbs	200 mg	2 tsp. or 10 mL
60–71 lbs	250 mg	2½ tsp. or 12.5 mL