

## Your 7- to 8-Year-Old Child

### Diet

- Offer a variety of healthy foods, and try to eat together as a family. Make time for breakfast. Encourage fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Have your child help in the kitchen.
- Limit fast foods, junk foods and sweets. Avoid soda and sport drinks. Limit juice to 4–6 ounces per day.
- Your child should drink 16–20 ounces per day of skim or low-fat milk. Other foods with calcium (yogurt, cheese, soy or almond milk, tofu, kale, broccoli) can also help meet calcium needs.
- Multivitamins may be recommended if your child's diet seems consistently inadequate.

### Elimination

- If bedwetting is an issue, we can discuss treatment options.
- 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 7–8 years of age, the average child needs about 10–11 hours of sleep.
- Nighttime fears and nightmares are common problems. Usually quick reassurance is sufficient.

### Development

- At this age, children understand rules, relationships and social principles. The peer group becomes increasingly important, and children identify with others with similar interests and abilities. Keep an eye out for problems with friends or signs of bullying.
- If you haven't started them already, assign responsibilities and chores. This will foster a sense of independence.

### Safety

- Children under 8 years of age and/or under 4'9" must be secured in a booster seat in the back 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.
- Make a point of buckling your own seat belt and not texting while driving.
- If you own a gun, store it unloaded and locked in a separate location from ammunition (which should also be locked).
- Teach your child the dangers of cars in the street, and continue to supervise.
- Use sunscreen, SPF 30 or greater, a hat and sunglasses.
- Encourage organized swimming lessons, but be aware that knowing how to swim does not ensure safety in the water. Supervision is still required. Use an age- and weight-appropriate life jacket at beaches and on boats, especially for the non-swimmer.
- Use a properly-fitted bicycle helmet and protective gear and teach bicycle, roller-blade, and scooter safety. Now is the time to teach the rules of the road.
- As your child matures, discuss avoidance of tobacco, alcohol, drugs and guns in a more detailed manner.
- Keep matches and lighters away from children. Talk to them about the dangers of fire.
- Develop a fire escape plan for your home. Reinforce what to do in case of emergency, especially dialing 911.
- Discuss stranger safety, playground safety and sports safety. Try role playing about the dangers of strangers.
- In case of accidental ingestion or poisoning, call the Illinois Poison Center at 800.222.1222.

## Other things to keep in mind

- Help your child learn about healthy lifestyles and encourage exercise. A good goal is an hour each day (not necessarily all at once). Exercising as a family can be rewarding.
- Limit the amount of television and monitor the shows your child watches. Avoid violent video games. Set reasonable rules and guidelines for TV and computer.
- The computer should be in a location that allows you to monitor your child's internet activity (not in your child's bedroom). Teach your child to never give out identifying information online. Be familiar with all services and websites that your child uses. Instruct your child to tell you about any online interactions that are suggestive, obscene, threatening or make your child feel uncomfortable. Consider a safety filter.
- Children continue to be very curious about their bodies at this age. Answer questions about body parts in a matter-of-fact way, using correct terminology. Let your child know that body parts which are 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.)
- Teach your child that it is always OK to ask a grownup for help if he is scared or worried.
- 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. Show affection and pride in your child's special strengths and use praise liberally.
- Do not over schedule your child. Too many activities can stress a child and family, and cause grades to suffer.
- Do not hit, shake or spank your child. Instead, talk about reasonable consequences for breaking the rules and make sure to follow through.

## 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 twice a day. Flossing should be done daily.
- A good resource for information about vaccines is [vaccine.chop.edu/parents](http://vaccine.chop.edu/parents).
- A useful website for reliable information about a wide variety of pediatric health topics is [healthychildren.org](http://healthychildren.org).

## Today and at each yearly check-up

- Your child will have a physical examination.
- Your questions and concerns will be answered.
- A tuberculosis skin test may be administered, and catch-up vaccines may be given.

### 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