

Raffles HealthNews

A PUBLICATION BY *RafflesMedicalGroup*

Childhood Infection Cheat Sheet

Guide to Your Kid's Health

Step by Step:
Common Parents' Anxieties Answered

Fever Mania

**Parenting
the App Way**

Scan here to see our videos for
the latest healthcare tips!



youtube.com/RafflesHospital



Expanding for You

Listing of Centres and Locations

Raffles Specialist Centre

LEVEL 13

Surgery Centre
Breast Centre
Urology Centre

LEVEL 12

Orthopaedic Centre
Pain Management Centre
Rehabilitation Centre

LEVEL 11

Radiology

LEVEL 10

Cancer Centre
Heart Centre

LEVEL 9

Internal Medicine Centre
Diabetes & Endocrine Centre
Neuroscience Centre

LEVEL 8

Counselling Centre
ENT Centre
Children Centre

Raffles Hospital

LEVEL 12

Women Centre
Fertility Centre
Raffles Executive Medical Centre
Raffles Health Screeners
Health Check

LEVEL 11

Eye Centre
Japanese Clinic
Skin & Aesthetics Centre

LEVEL 9

Ward 9

LEVEL 8

Ward 8

LEVEL 7

Intensive Care Unit
Operating Theatres
Clinical Laboratory

LEVEL 2

Raffles Medical
Raffles Chinese Medicine

LEVEL 1

24 Hour Emergency
Raffles Dental
Nuclear Medicine Centre

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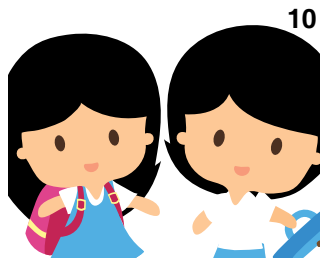
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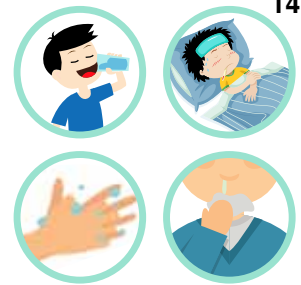
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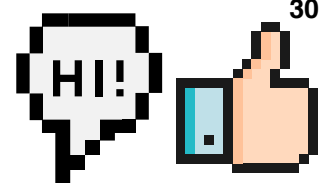
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 Terminal 3 B1*
 Terminal 3 B2*
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 Transit 2
 Transit 3
 Transit 4
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 Raffles HealthScreeners 6311 1222
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www.rafflesspecialist.com

24-hour Appointments Hotline (RH) 6311 1222
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 Fax No. 6311 2136
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 • Raffles Holland V 6255 1911
 • Shaw Centre 6838 0122

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 • Shanghai 86 21 6197 2300
 • Shenzhen 86 755 2669 3667
 • TEDA 86 22 6537 7616
 • Tianjin 86 22 2352 0143

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 • Ho Chi Minh City 84 28 3824 0777
 • Vung Tau 84 25 4385 8776

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 • Ho Chi Minh City 84 9 4781 5338
 • Jakarta 6221 2952 7102
 • Surabaya 6231 5120 5012

Patient Liaison Office

• Chittagong 88 01713 084406
 • Dhaka 88 01730 727272
 • Solo 6281 1139 9917
 • Yangon 95 9 5127625

* Clinics near / with X-ray facilities

* Specialist dental services

Hello Readers!

Learn to Learn

Understand how learning disabilities and disorders can affect your child.

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Help, My Child Won't Eat!

Meal time tips for fussy children.

Page 26

Parenting the App Way

Try these helpful apps to simplify your parenting journey.

Page 33

As parents, worrying about our child's health and development is second nature. Yet, no one gave us an instruction manual as we embark on this parenting journey. If you did, let me have a copy because I sure didn't get mine when my two kids were born! So we make do with information whether sound or not from a whole variety of sources; the elderly, your friends and the internet! Getting useful and evidence-based information can be time consuming and confusing. In this issue of Raffles HealthNews, we share tips to alleviate parenting woes.

In our cover story (pages 10 to 13), we share tips to counter common worries parents encounter in a child's growing up years. If your child falls sick often, take a look at how you can better cope with infections (pages 14 to 15) and fever (pages 20 to 21). In pages 16 to 17, parents can learn more about eczema, a common skin condition that affects one in five children locally.

Worrying about how your child is growing and eating? Fret not! Find out what essential nutrients that your child should be consuming at his age (pages 24 to 25), and the type of healthy snacks that are suitable for him (page 23). If you have a child who is a fussy eater, raise your right hand. Turn to page 26 for some useful tips to get your kids to eat their veggies.

If you are worried about how technology is affecting your child, we share how to manage technology use and eye care tips (pages 30 to 31). Divert some of their boundless energy by bringing your child outdoors for some family activities (pages 34 to 45) or get them to help out in household chores (pages 36 to 37).

As parents, we can make growing up a wonderful experience for both us and our children.

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RafflesMedGrp



Dr Melvyn Wong
Deputy Medical Director
Raffles Medical





Raffles Specialist Centre Opens

After over three years of construction, Raffles Specialist Centre is now open! The 20-storey Raffles Specialist Centre is a one-stop medical hub supporting patient-centred care. The building will house both specialist centres and diagnostic services. These include Counselling, ENT, Children, Internal Medicine, Diabetes & Endocrine, Neuroscience, Heart, Cancer, Radiology, Rehabilitation, Orthopaedic, Surgery, Urology and a new Breast Centre. With the completion of the Raffles Specialist Centre, extensive renovations to the existing Raffles Hospital building will be carried out to expand its inpatient services and refresh its wards.



New Docs on the Block



Dr Liew Hui Min
Specialist in Dermatology & Consultant
Raffles Skin & Aesthetics

Dr Liew obtained her MRCP in UK. As part of her training, she was attached to University of Leicester Hospitals, University of Leeds Hospitals, Glasgow Royal Infirmary, Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. She completed her dermatology training at the King's College Hospital in London and was inducted as a FAMS in 2013. Upon returning to Singapore, Dr Liew joined KKH as a consultant where she established new services in paediatric and women's dermatology, and helped set up multi-disciplinary clinics for children.

Besides general adult dermatology, Dr Liew has special interests in paediatric dermatology and women's dermatology. Her clinical interests include eczema and allergy, hair and nails problems, skin surgery, birthmarks, vascular malformations, neonatal dermatology, vulva skin conditions, obstetric dermatology, hair loss / excessive hair, sexual health and sexually transmitted infections, and pigmentation. She is able to converse fluently in English, Malay, Bahasa Indonesia, Mandarin and dialects.

Changes in Clinic Operating Hours



Compass One

1 Sengkang Square #04-09
Singapore 545078
Tel: 6385 5057

Daily

8.30am - 9.30pm

Rivervale Mall

11 Rivervale Crescent #02-17
Singapore 545082
Tel: 6385 2154

Mon to Fri

8.30am - 1.00pm
2.00pm - 5.30pm
6.30pm - 9.30pm

Sat

8.30am - 1.00pm

HarbourFront Centre

1 Maritime Square #03-56
Singapore 099253
Tel: 6273 3078

Mon

8.30am - 7.00pm

Tue to Fri

8.30am - 5.30pm

Sat

8.30am - 1.00pm

Waterway Point

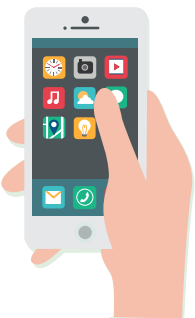
83 Punggol Central #02-29
Singapore 828761
Tel: 6384 5655

Mon to Fri

8.30am - 1.00pm
2.00pm - 5.30pm
6.30pm - 9.30pm

Sat, Sun & Public Holidays

8.30am - 1.00pm



Download our app (RafflesMedGp) or visit our website (www.rafflesmedical.com) to access the full list of our clinics' operating hours.



Dr Marcus Tan
Specialist in Aviation Medicine and
Ophthalmology & Consultant
Raffles Eye Centre

Dr Tan completed his MBBS at NUS and went on to complete his postgraduate diploma in Aviation Medicine and Master in Ophthalmology. He was dually certified as a specialist in Aviation Medicine in 2010 and Ophthalmology in 2013. Prior to joining Raffles Hospital, Dr Tan served in several leadership roles within the Singapore Armed Forces, the Ophthalmology Department of National University Hospital as well as the ophthalmology service on JurongHealth Campus. He was Head of the SAF Vision Performance Centre. He concurrently holds the roles of Consultant in Aviation Medicine and Ophthalmology in SAF and Clinical Assessor for the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS).

Dr Tan has special interests in refractive surgery and visual performance treatment strategies for high myopias.

Kids' Dental Examination & Cleaning

Inculcate good dental habits in your child by having them practise good dental hygiene and bringing them to a dentist for regular examination and cleaning.

- Dental consultation & polishing
- Excludes X-rays and other treatments
- Applicable for children aged 12 and below

\$75 (Price inclusive of GST)

Terms & conditions apply

Please call our Raffles Dental hotline number @ **6311 2360** to make your next appointment.



Raffles PCN Support Your Fight Against Chronic Conditions

In line with the national emphasis on chronic disease management, Raffles Medical has launched three Primary Care Network (PCN) clusters in the East, Central and West.

With this, you can now get your follow-up check-ups on your chronic disease such as diabetes, hypertension, lipid disorders etc, and speak to nurses about how to care for your condition in a Raffles PCN clinic near you rather than to travel down to the hospital or polyclinic. You will be enrolled into a chronic disease register for systematic tracking of your health data.

In addition, each PCN has a suite of support services to make care more accessible and convenient for you. A case management team and counsellors will partner with your family physician to support you in your fight against chronic diseases. Specialised services such as dedicated retinal photography and diabetic foot examination can also be done in the PCN for your convenience.

CHAS cardholders, the Pioneer Generation and Singaporeans can similarly enjoy subsidies for your treatment.

Visit www.rafflesmedicalgroup.com/primary-care-network or call us at **6282 4150** for more information on Raffles PCN.

PCN is an initiative by the Ministry of Health (MOH) to better manage chronic disease in the community.

Benefits of PCN

- Convenient locations
- Shorter waiting time
- Systematic tracking of health data
- Support of chronic case management team and counsellors
- Availability of specialised services (eg retinal photography and diabetic foot examination)
- CHAS card privileges



Baby Vaccination & Checkup

First Six Months at **\$950**

Package includes:

- Consultation by paediatrician
- Developmental assessment
- Vaccines protecting against hepatitis B, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis, haemophilus influenza B, and pneumococcal disease

Your Baby's Age

6th Week

4th Month

6th Month

Vaccinations Given

6-in-1 **

5-in-1 * and Pneumococcal

6-in-1 and Pneumococcal

Terms and conditions apply.

Nine to 18 Months Old at **\$950**

Package includes:

- Consultation by paediatrician
- Developmental assessment
- Vaccines protecting against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis, haemophilus influenza B, pneumococcal disease, and chicken pox

Your Baby's Age

9th Month

12th Month

15th Month

18th Month

Vaccinations Given / Procedures Done

Developmental Assessment

Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella, and Pneumococcal

Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Varicella

5-in-1



Relocation of Hong Kong Airport Medical Centre

The Raffles Medical Centre at Hong Kong International Airport Terminal 1 will be operating at the following location.

**6T-104, Level 6, Terminal 1
Hong Kong International Airport**

Contact Numbers

Western Medicine: +852 2261 2626

Emergency Hotline: +852 2261 0999

Physio & Chinese Medicine: +852 2186 8985

Opening Hours

Daily 7am – 12 midnight (Doctor on-site)

Daily 12 midnight – 7am (Nurse on-site and doctor off-site on call)

Physiotherapy & Chinese Medicine

By appointment

Medisave for Approved Vaccinations

Under the National Adult Immunisation Schedule (NAIS), adult Singaporeans, aged 18 and above, can use their Medisave for approved vaccinations.

It is important to keep your vaccinations up-to-date, and protect yourself against vaccine-preventable diseases.

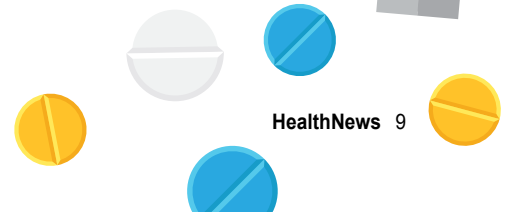
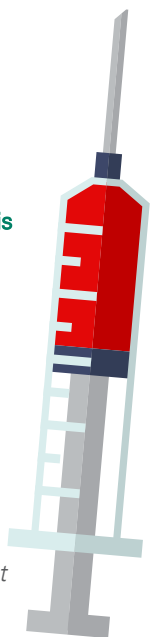
Raffles Medical clinics offer the recommended vaccinations. Check with our doctors about the recommended vaccinations and your suitability.

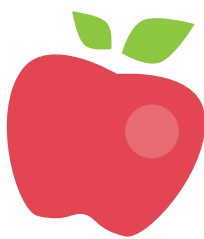
For more information, visit www.rafflesmedical.com/nais

Offered Vaccinations

- Influenza
- Pneumococcal
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
- Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (Tdap)
- Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella

Recommended vaccinations differ for different target population groups





STEP BY STEP

By Ashley Tuen

First, you are worried about your child's growth and development. But before you know it, your child is heading to a childcare centre, followed by pre-school and soon preparing for primary school. You start worrying if your child is getting along with others, if his playtime is adequate or if he should be attending enrichment classes.

I consulted our specialists from Raffles Children Centre and Raffles Specialists-Raffles Holland V on handling your child's growing years.



SCHOOL



Separation anxiety

The first day of school goes well. However, before you can say goodbye to your child on the next day, he starts to wail, clings on to you and refuses to enter the class.

“Separation anxiety varies from child to child but starts to appear just before a child turns one and may continue till pre-school age or beyond. This is a normal response. Help your child by being patient. Reassure him that each separation is only temporary and praise him when each episode is handled well. Seek help if his separation anxiety is very intense and affects him from usual activities like playing or going to school,” advised Dr Christelle Tan, Specialist in Paediatric Medicine & Consultant, Raffles Specialists-Raffles Holland V.

Social skills and friends

While school is a place for education, it is also where your child learns to interact with others and develops social skills – an important factor in a child’s emotional health and well-being.

“Each child is unique and has a personality. There is absolutely nothing wrong if a child is inherently introverted. It is not a problem that needs fixing. Encourage him and give him a platform to make friends, like arranging one or two regular friends as playdates, and slowly expanding this circle,” shared Dr Veronica Toh, Specialist in Paediatric Medicine & Consultant, Raffles Children Centre.

For parents who are worried that their child will be bullied, the main point is to constantly guide and teach them on what is appropriate and what is not. “Let him know that no one should ever have a right to hit him or verbally abuse him. He should speak up against the bully and where necessary, inform an adult,” added Dr Toh.



Enrichment classes

Your friend’s five-year-old child is able to read mathematical tables while your five-year-old enjoys living in the present. You wonder if he has too much play time and begin scheduling him for different activities and classes over the weekends – mathematics, language, martial arts etc.

“It is important that your child participates in various activities but ensure that they are not forced to participate in these activities. These classes help discover your child’s interests and encourage pursuance in the longer term. Some life skills such as swimming, cycling and running may be worth cultivating from a young age,” advised Dr Chitra Ramalingam, Specialist in Paediatric Medicine & Consultant, Raffles Children Centre.

Home

Nutrition intake



Nutrients are essential for a growing child to develop his physical and mental potential. How can you ensure he is adopting a healthy eating habit and is having sufficient intake of nutrients?

“The best way is to plot his growth percentiles on a growth chart. If your child’s growth is adequate and his development is normal, there is generally nothing to worry about. If your child eats a balanced diet from different food groups and has a variety of different textures, tastes and colours, there should not be an issue with nutritional or vitamin deficiency,” advised Dr Chong Jin Ho, Specialist in Paediatric Medicine & Consultant, Raffles Children Centre.

You can refer to pages 24 and 25 for more information on nutrition for kids.

Falling sick

It never seems to end – fever, flu and cough. You have lost count of the number of times that your child has fallen sick. You start giving him supplements in hope of boosting his immune system but he still seems to be falling sick too frequently. You start searching up your child’s symptoms online, and get worried by what you read.

“Even during mild viral illnesses like a common flu, there can be high swinging fevers and young children may refuse to eat or drink during this period of time. Online searches may lead you to rare and fatal diagnoses that are not applicable to your child. What can be reassuring is knowing what danger these symptoms or signs will bring, and bringing them to a doctor early,” advised Dr Tan.



Sleep

It is bedtime but if you have a child who does not want to sleep, your sleep time gets affected too. A good night’s rest ensures proper mind and body development but if sleep quality is poor, it results in irritability and grumpiness in both you and your child.

“Watch your child’s diet during the day. Limit the intake of energy and fizzy drinks as they contain caffeine that can affect sleep. Avoid these drinks post lunchtime. You can also encourage physical activity during the day to help them fall asleep at night, but avoid exercising just before bedtime. A warm bath, bedtime stories or a warm glass of milk could help them to sleep better,” advised Dr Chitra.



OUT AND ABOUT



Toy store tantrum

Toy stores are great playgrounds for children but they can be a nightmare for some parents. He wants a toy but when you say “no”, it sends him into a meltdown, crying and insisting. You are suddenly in the spotlight among passers-by.

“Let him understand that he is not entitled to have whatever he fancies and the consequences (eg time-out) should he start a tantrum. Give him a warning if he starts a tantrum. If he persists, bring him out of the store and execute the time-out technique (staying rooted at a boring spot for a few minutes). If he refuses, hold him there gently but firmly. Be consistent and do not give in just because you are in the spotlight. Otherwise, that will only encourage him to do the same in the future,” shared Dr Chong.

Foreign body ingestions (FBIs)

The age of 18 months to three years old is where toddlers come to appreciate their new-found freedom. Their natural curiosity will inevitably lead to mouthing objects and some of these are unfortunately swallowed. Most items swallowed should pass through the alimentary system uneventfully. Commonly ingested foreign bodies range from coins to safety pins and keys. Dangerous items include sharp objects, button batteries and water-expandable toys.

“Keep the home environment safe by not leaving dangerous items lying around. Provide the child with age-appropriate toys and also be mindful of how the batteries are secured in toys. Educate him on what is a toy and what is not. Seek urgent medical attention if he develops symptoms of choking, vomiting or abdominal pain,” advised Dr Joyce Chua, Specialist in Paediatric Surgery & Consultant, Raffles Children Centre.



First Aid box



“It is useful for each household to maintain a personal first aid box that includes items such as plasters / band aids, burn cream and microtape.”

- Dr Goh E Shaun, Specialist in Emergency Medicine & Consultant, Raffles 24 Hour Emergency

Is Your Child a Band Aid Addict?

Teach your child that band aids and plasters are for people who have injuries. If he has a cartoon plaster, educate him that a band aid has to be thrown away once his injury gets better, and when the pain is gone. Keeping the dirty band aid on might cause the wound to get infected, thus causing more pain.



Childhood Infection *Cheat Sheet*

If you have a pre-schooler or a child in childcare, you would not be unfamiliar with infections. The environment, coupled with the habits of children, causes children to fall ill as often as eight to 10 times in a year. To help you better cope with the conditions, here's a cheat sheet on the common infections. **By Magdalene Lee**



HFMD

Symptoms

- Fever
- Lethargy
- Sore throat
- Ulcers in mouth and on tongue
- Rash or blisters on palms of hands, soles of feet, and / or buttocks
- Poor appetite
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea

Treatment



Hydrate



Rest



Hand Washing



Cover Mouth

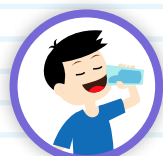
Prevention

Rotavirus

Symptoms

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Dehydration

Treatment



Hydrate

Prevention



Vaccination



Influenza

Symptoms

- Running nose
- Nasal congestion
- Sneezing
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fever
- Stomach pain / diarrhoea

Treatment



Hydrate

Prevention



Vaccination



Did you know?

Health Sciences Authority (HSA) has approved a dengue vaccine for a select group of suitable individuals aged between 12 and 45 years. (No vaccine is available for young children yet).

Dengue

Symptoms

- Sudden onset of fever for two to seven days

Other symptoms may include:

- Severe headache with pain behind the eye
- Joint and muscle pain
- Skin rashes
- Nausea and vomiting
- Bleeding from the nose or gums, or easy bruising of the skin

Treatment



Hospital Treatment



Medication

Prevention



Mosquito Patch



Mosquito Repellent



Chicken Pox

Symptoms

- Fever
- Itchy vesicular rash

Seek immediate medical attention if there's lethargy, irritability or breathlessness.

Treatment



Look Out for Bacteria Skin Infection

Prevention



Practise Good Hygiene



Did you know?

By age three, two in three children would have had one ear infection. Ear infections peak in the first two years of life especially between six and 18 months.

Norovirus Gastroenteritis

Symptoms

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal pain / cramps
- Watery / loose diarrhoea
- Low-grade fever
- Muscle pain

Treatment



Hydrate



Hand Washing



Cook Food Thoroughly



Ear Infections

Symptoms

- Fever
- Ear discomfort / pain
- Scratching of ear (usually one-sided)
- Appear irritable
- Vomiting
- Discharge from ear

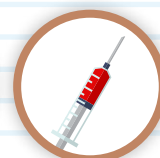
Treatment



Antibiotic Ear Drops



Limit Pacifier Use



Vaccination





To Itch his own

How to identify and manage childhood eczema.

By Joanna Lee

About 20 per cent of children in Singapore suffer from eczema, and approximately 5 per cent may progress from moderate to severe forms. Although eczema affects people of all age groups, children under five years old are more commonly affected. Dr Liew Hui Min, Specialist in Dermatology and Consultant, Raffles Skin & Aesthetics, explains more in detail.

Eczema is a chronic skin disorder that comes in many different types, of which atopic dermatitis is more common in young children. It is part of a group of atopic conditions such as allergic rhinitis, asthma and allergic conjunctivitis.

If a child has a parent or family member who has an atopic condition, he / she will have an increased chance of getting eczema. Although eczema is not contagious, it does have a significant effect on the patient both physically and psychologically. Thankfully, its symptoms can be managed by avoiding triggers, regular application of moisturisers, using medications when required, and leading a healthy lifestyle.

Symptoms

Eczema appears in different forms, including the following, and differs from person to person:

- Itchy red rash and flares periodically
- Dry and scaly skin
- Open wound and excoriated skin due to scratching
- Weepy skin due to infection
- Appear as blisters when infected or acutely
- Raised bumps due to chronic scratching and rubbing of the skin
- Sensitive skin to various allergens

Dr Liew highlighted: "Eczema can also present in many forms, commonly as ring-shaped rash that are usually mistaken as fungal infections and this is partly due to the partial use of topical steroid."

Trigger Points

There are many factors that can trigger eczema but they fall under two main categories - environment and genetics.

Environment

Environmental factors include cold and dry weather, dust, heat, pollution and sweat. Dr Liew pointed out that in Singapore's context, heat, humid weather, and house dust mites, which thrive better in such environment, are the common aggravating factor for eczema. Breaks or cracks in the skin cause moisture loss and creates an entry point for bacteria and viruses to worsen eczema. Physical and emotional stress may also result in a flare of eczema. Sometimes food or allergens found in the environment such as animal dander may also be a recurrent trigger factor. If you have any concern about the allergies, seek help from your paediatric dermatologist or allergist before restricting food from your growing child.

Genetics

There is a close relationship between our skin barrier and immune system that are both controlled by multiple genes. For example, some eczema patients have filaggrin (a protein that is essential for skin to mature properly) deficiency that is caused by a genetic mutation. The loss of this skin protein increases the risk of developing eczema.

Treatment

Many parents tend to avoid using steroid creams and ointments prescribed by doctors even though they are proven to be safe and effective if used appropriately.

Depending on the location and severity of your child's eczema, a combination of creams with topical antibiotics may be prescribed. Topical steroid should be applied to the affected area twice daily until the rash has resolved completely before topical steroid can be stopped. The recommended dose is one finger-tip unit to an area of two palms.

Calcineurin inhibitors (eg tacrolimus) are alternative prescribed medications without the side effects of steroids and may be recommended for children over two years old over sensitive areas such as around the eyes or face.

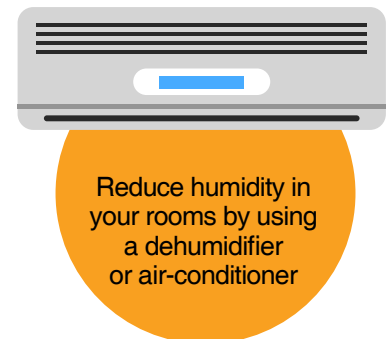
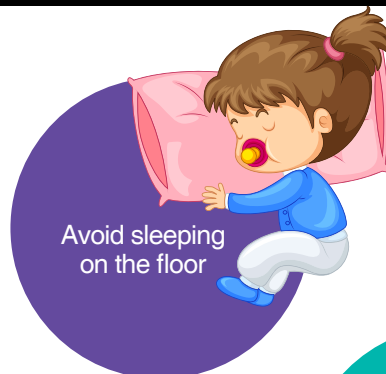
"The key to prevent further deterioration of the skin, before requiring potent topical steroid, oral steroid or oral antibiotics, is to moisturise frequently and treat the affected inflamed skin early with a low potency steroid cream," advised Dr Liew.

Prevention

Try the following

- Avoid any known trigger if possible
- Take short lukewarm water baths of less than 10 minutes each time
- Avoid using harsh soaps and gently pat skin dry with towel after showering
- Apply a creamy fragrance-free moisturiser to skin immediately after a shower and reapply whenever the skin is dry
- Trim your child's nails in order to avoid scratching the affected area
- Wear comfortable and loose clothing made of smooth material to avoid rubbing against the skin
- Keep your home clean and dust-free (see below)
- Maintain good lifestyle habits and eat healthily

How to Reduce Dust Mites in Your Home?



Advice by Dr Liew Hui Min, Specialist in Dermatology and Consultant, Raffles Skin & Aesthetics

Learn to learn



Learning disabilities and disorders can affect a child's self-esteem and motivation. Many children struggle for a long time before being diagnosed. Understand how you can help your child as we speak to Dr Chong Jin Ho, Specialist in Paediatric Medicine & Consultant, Raffles Children Centre. **By Queenie Ho**



Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

What is it?

It is a condition related to brain development that impacts how a person perceives and socialises with others, causing problems in social interaction and communication.

words..
words

Dyslexia

What is it?

Learning disorder characterised by difficulty reading, spelling and recalling known words.

Signs & Symptoms

- Late in talking
- Learns new words slowly
- Has problems forming words correctly, like reversing sounds in words or confusing words that sound alike
- Has problems remembering or naming letters, numbers and colors
- Has difficulties learning nursery rhymes or playing rhyming games

Signs & Symptoms

- Reduced eye contact, lack of response to their name or indifference to caregivers
- Difficulty learning
- May have repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests or activities
- May have problems with social interaction and communication skills
- Some have signs of lower than normal intelligence, while other children have normal to high intelligence but have trouble communicating and applying what they know in everyday life and adjusting to social situations

What Should I Do?

- Maximise your child's ability to function by reducing autism spectrum disorder symptoms, and supporting development and learning
- Support your child's learning journey
- Go for early intervention to help your child learn critical social, communication, functional and behavioural skills

No cure exists for autism spectrum disorder, and there is no one-size-fits-all treatment.

What Should I Do?

- Address the problem early
- Read aloud to your child
- Work with your child's school
- Encourage reading time and set an example yourself

Attention-deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

What is it?

A chronic condition that includes a combination of persistent problems, such as difficulty sustaining attention, hyperactivity and impulsive behaviour.

Signs & Symptoms

- Fail to pay close attention to details and have trouble staying focused
- Have difficulty following instructions as well as organising tasks and activities
- Easily distracted
- Have difficulty staying seated
- Have trouble playing or doing an activity quietly
- Talk too much
- Have difficulty waiting for his or her turn
- Interrupt or intrude on others' conversations, games or activities
- May affect school, home life and relationships negatively

Symptoms should be observed for at least six months.

What Should I Do?

- Be consistent, set limits and have clear consequences for your child's behaviour
- Put together a daily routine for your child with clear expectations
- Avoid multitasking yourself when talking with your child, make eye contact when giving instructions, and set aside a few minutes every day to praise your child
- Work with teachers and caregivers to identify problems early

Milestones for Pre-schoolers

Each child develops at his own pace, and many don't follow exactly the timelines. If you have concerns about your child's development, discuss them with your doctor.

2

years old


LANGUAGE

- Speak at least 50 words
- Link two words together, such as "my cup" or "no juice"
- Speak clearly enough for parents to understand about half of the words

SOCIAL

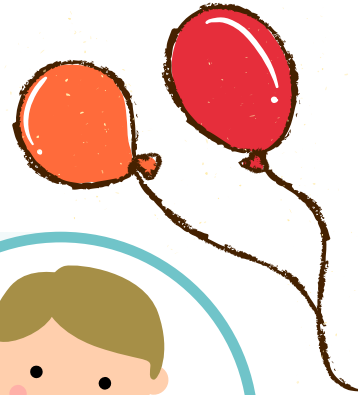
- Show more independence
- Copy others
- Get excited when with other children

COGNITIVE

- Play simple make-believe games
- Begin to sort objects by shape and colour
- Find hidden objects

PHYSICAL

- Stand on tiptoes
- Begin to run
- Kick a ball



LANGUAGE

- Speak 250 to 500 words or more
- Speak in three- and four-word sentences
- Correctly use pronouns
- State their first name
- Speak clearly enough for strangers to understand most of the time

SOCIAL

- Express affection openly
- Easily separate from parents
- Get upset with major changes in routine

COGNITIVE

- Turn book pages one at a time
- Copy a circle
- Do puzzles with three or four pieces

PHYSICAL

- Walk up and down the stairs, with alternating feet
- Run and climb
- Pedal a tricycle

3

years old


4

years old


LANGUAGE

- Answer simple questions
- Use sentences with four or more words

SOCIAL

- Cooperate with other children
- Talk about likes and dislikes
- Become more creative with make-believe play

COGNITIVE

- Print some capital letters
- Draw a person with two to four body parts
- Understand the idea of counting
- Start to understand time

PHYSICAL

- Hop or stand on one foot for two seconds
- Catch a bounced ball most of the time
- Use scissors with supervision

LANGUAGE

- Understand rhyming
- Use sentences that give many details
- Use the future tense
- State their full name

SOCIAL

- Want to be like their friends
- Can follow rules
- Aware of gender
- Like to sing, act and dance

COGNITIVE

- Know about common items, such as food and money
- Count 10 or more objects
- Copy a triangle and other geometric patterns

PHYSICAL

- Stand on one foot for at least 10 seconds
- Hop, skip, swing and do somersaults
- Use the toilet without help

5

years old


FEVER Mania

How to stay calm when it burns

By Joanna Lee

It is not uncommon for young children to experience fever more often than adults. This is because their immune system is still developing. As a concerned parent, do you feel panicky and at times even helpless to react to the situation especially when your child's body temperature spikes to more than 38 degree Celsius? Dr Christelle Tan, Specialist in Paediatric Medicine & Consultant, Raffles Specialists – Holland V, shares how to care for a feverish child at home, and when to consult a doctor.

A Natural Response

Fever is our body's natural response to fight infections and other stimuli that causes inflammation within our body. It slows down bacteria growth and viruses, and enhances our body's production of white blood cells that are responsible for fighting infections.

In children, fever is most commonly caused by viral infections that are also known as the common flu and stomach flu. Children may have symptoms of cough, runny nose, vomiting, diarrhoea or rashes during this period. These viral infections are mostly benign and generally result in fever that lasts for four to five days before it resolves itself without the need for targeted therapy.

"Parents should note that the height of the fever does not correlate to the severity of the illness. Therefore, there is no specific temperature beyond that parents must bring their child to see a doctor as long as their child remains active and well. For viral infections, temperature can spike up to even 41 degrees Celsius for the first few days with resolution in between. Most children can look tired and have decreased appetite during this time, but in between these episodes when the fever settles, they are generally active and can play," said Dr Tan.

Treating at Home

Fever spikes occur very often in the middle of the night. Parents are advised to always have a standby of fever medications at home to administer when this happens. But in the event that parents do not have any and their child is otherwise well apart from the fever, parents can firstly ensure that their child is not overwrapped.

Remove all blankets and thick clothing, and change the child to wear light clothing. They can use a room temperature wet towel to clean their child's perspiration and use a dry towel thereafter. It is also important to keep the child well hydrated during fever. Therefore, parents can breastfeed or prepare another milk feed during the night if the child is young or hydrate their child with plain water.



“Fever in itself is not dangerous to the child and does not cause brain damage. However, fever is an indication of an underlying infection that should be evaluated.”

Dr Christelle Tan

Medication

There are two main types of medications that you can feed your child (older than six months old) with paracetamol and ibuprofen, to relieve fever. Use them provided that your child is still active and drinking well. Do note that these medications do not treat the underlying cause of the fever. Therefore, do not be alarmed if the fever returns again a few hours later. This is expected.



Paracetamol

- Use it every four to six hours if your child has a fever
- Do not use it in infants less than three months old unless instructed by your doctor

Ibuprofen

- Usually used for high fevers above 38.5 degrees Celsius
- It can be used one to two hours after paracetamol if the fever remains persistent
- To be used every six to eight hours
- Unless specified by your doctor, do not use it in infants less than a year old

Sponging

Dr Tan advised that this practice is not advised generally and is not proven to be effective in children with fever. As fever is usually caused by the body's thermostat readjusting to a higher internal temperature to fight infections, by cooling a child's body or forehead on the outside, the body senses that the external body temperature is "too cold" compared to the internal set temperature. Hence, this may result in shivering, which is a type of response by the body to generate more heat, and can cause the child to feel more uncomfortable.



This form of external cooling is usually used for heat stroke because the body has lost its internal temperature control, unlike fever in infections. If you want to help your child to feel more comfortable, you may use a towel soaked in room temperature water and sponge the forehead, nape of neck, armpits and groin.

When to Consult a Doctor...

- Your child is less than six months old.
- The fever duration exceeds four to five days.
- Fever in some children can cause fever fits. These fits do not cause any brain damage unless they are prolonged. However, if your child has a fever fit, you should bring him / her to see a doctor.
- Your child shows signs of dehydration; having poor urine output (less than once every eight hours), lethargy, crying without tears, significant weight loss of more than 5 per cent, consuming less than two-third of his / her usual food intake, or has breathing difficulties.
- Your child develops a rash or oral ulcers. Certain conditions require your child to be away from the childcare centre or school until he / she recovers.



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Popcorn



Yes, popcorn is a wholegrain and actually has four grams of fibre per three-cup serving. Air-popped plain popcorn may not entice a child but you can jazz it up with grated cheese, honey or cinnamon sugar in moderation.

Guilt-Free Snacks

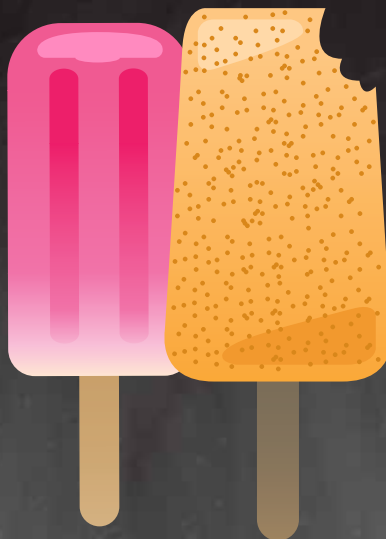
Snacks are a part of a child's diet and very often, kids look forward to snack time more than normal mealtime. Good healthy snacks play an important role in meeting a child's daily nutritional needs. How do you ensure that your child is eating healthily, even at snack time? We ask Ms Kesslyn How, Nutritionist, Raffles Diabetes & Endocrine Centre, to name some healthy snacks for your child.

By Queenie Ho



Pizza

Pizza is really another form of sandwich, and can be healthy with the right use of toppings. The combinations are really uncountable, sliced bell peppers, boiled chicken breast, pineapples, tomatoes, low sodium canned tuna in water, tomato or olive oil. Sprinkle some chopped nuts and seeds for some crunch. It can even be a meal by itself. You may also opt for pizza base made from wholemeal flour.



Home-made Popsicles

Popsicles are a great hit with children, especially in hot and humid Singapore. You can make them with yoghurt for the extra calcium intake, or simply blend fruits and freeze. It's a healthy treat for your child and you!

Home-made Muesli / Granola Bars

Made with rolled oats, nuts and seeds as well as fruits and drizzle of honey, these bars are rich in vitamins, minerals, omega-3 and fibre. Involve your children in the preparation to develop their interest in what they eat.



Cheese

Flavourful and satisfying, not to mention the protein and calcium it contains. The key is making sure that it is not in every meal and snack, as cheese contains high levels of sodium. Pair it up with wholegrain plain crackers or top whole-grain crackers with a soft cheese spread or a piece of tasty cheddar for easy-to-prepare snacks that are rich in calcium.

Too much snacking is bad for your teeth



Dr Adrian Ain Keui, Dental Surgeon, Raffles Dental, cautioned about snacking too much. "Snacking too often can contribute to cavities and tooth decay. In order not to risk your child's dental health, avoid high sugar and sodium snacks, and consume more low sugar and high fibre snacks."

Your child's primary teeth are as important as their adult teeth.

- Primary teeth are important for speech development and mastication of a balanced diet.
- Most children begin losing their baby teeth around the ages of five or six and will continue at age 12 or 13.
- If a primary tooth decays or is removed too early, the space necessary for the permanent teeth is lost and can only be regained through orthodontic treatment.
- Proper care of a child's primary teeth is very important, as these teeth hold space for future eruption of permanent teeth.

Still thinking if that plate of food is sufficient for your child? All in all, the key to healthy eating is having your child eat a variety from each of the five food groups. Ms Kesslyn How, Nutritionist, Raffles Diabetes & Endocrine Centre, shares how much should a child eat in a day.

Servings are recommended for children aged two to six years.

The



Fruits

Include a variety to provide various vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre, as these are important in helping your body stay healthy.

Two years old: Half serving
Three to six years old: One serving

Examples of one serving: One small apple, orange (130g), one wedge papaya, watermelon (130g), 10 grapes, strawberries (50g) and one medium banana.



Vegetables

Important source of vitamins and minerals. Eat a colourful variety of vegetables as different vegetables protect our body differently.

Two years old: Half serving
Three to six years old: One serving

Examples of one serving: One quarter round plate (10 inch) of cooked vegetables.

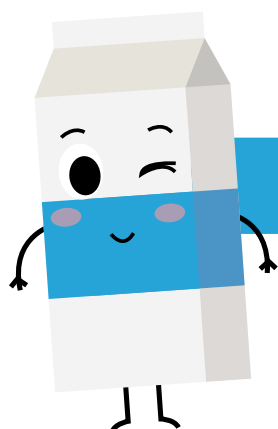
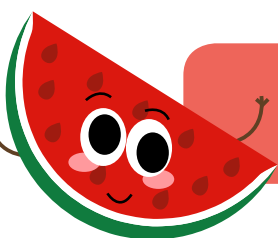


Dairy

Excellent source of calcium, which is vital for strong and healthy bones.

Two years old: One and a half serving
Three to six years old: One serving

Examples of one serving: One glass of low fat milk, one slice of cheese or a cup of yoghurt (250ml).



Food Groups

By Ashley Tuen

Grains

Whole grains provide nutrients such as carbohydrates (energy), vitamins B and E, and minerals (zinc and iron) that are needed for growth and development. Whole grains are also high in fibre which can help to prevent constipation.

Two years old: Three servings

Three to six years old: Three to four servings

Examples of one serving: Two slices of bread, half bowl rice or noodles, four plain biscuits or one and a half cups of plain cornflakes.

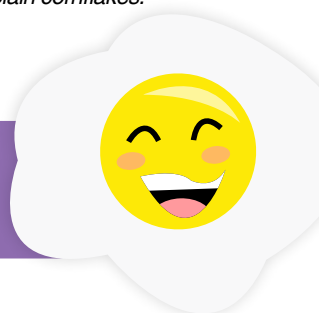


Protein

Protein builds, maintains and repairs the tissues in our body. Our body also uses it to produce haemoglobin.

Two to six years old: Two servings

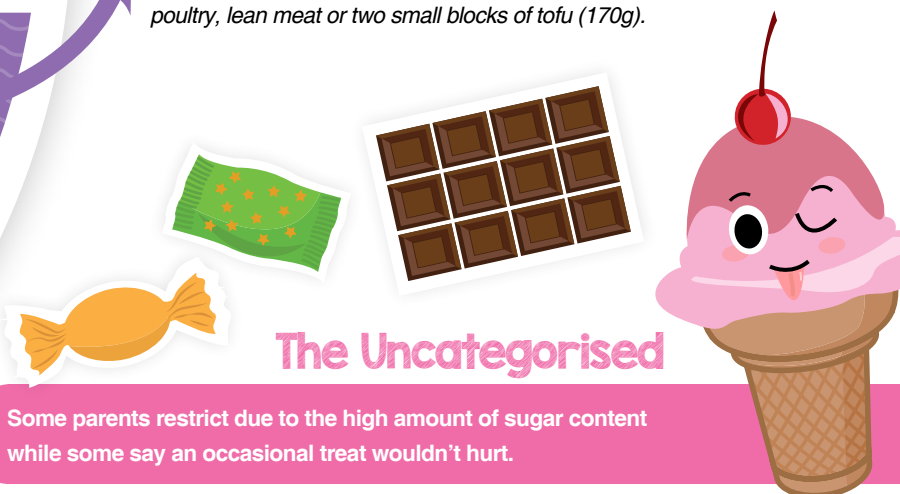
Examples of one serving: One palm-sized fish, skinless poultry, lean meat or two small blocks of tofu (170g).



The Uncategorised

Some parents restrict due to the high amount of sugar content while some say an occasional treat wouldn't hurt.

According to the Health Promotion Board (HPB), the recommended amount of sugar intake for two years old is seven teaspoons, and nine teaspoons for those aged three to six. This includes sugar from honey, jam, fruit juice, soft drink and processed food such as sweets and chocolates. Always choose products with labels like "no added sugar" or "less or reduced sugar".



HELP, MY CHILD WON'T EAT!

As a parent it can be worrying if your child refuses to eat, is choosy about food, or eating only a few foods and rejecting the rest. This “choosy” eating may be your child’s early attempts to make decisions and be assertive – a natural part of growing up. Dr Chu Hui Ping, Specialist in Paediatric Medicine & Consultant, Raffles Children Centre, and Ms Bibi Chia, Principal Dietitian, Raffles Diabetes & Endocrine Centre share tips to get your fussy child to eat.

By Dr Melvyn Wong

Limit table time

Sitting at the dining room table for a long time without eating doesn't teach good food habits. At the end of mealtime, quietly remove the plate.

Taste something new!

Keep offering new food even if your child rejects them at first. Children need to be exposed to a food several times before they accept the new food. Try offering a new food at the start of a meal when most children are hungry but make sure the rest of the meal is familiar. Encourage your child to taste at least one bite of the new food. Avoid forcing them.

Children have small stomachs. Small meals with snacks in between are easier than three big meals a day. Don't pile food onto his plate as it may put him off. What is more important is not the quantity, but the quality of the food consumed.

Keep it small!

Practise good eating habits. Children are great imitators and are naturally curious. If he sees others eating a food, he may be more likely to be interested and keen to try.

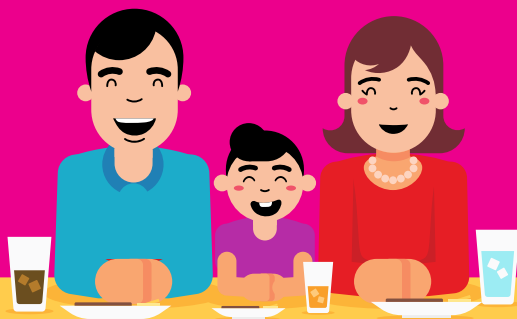
“Do as I do” – be a good role model

Avoid forcing by bribing or threatening

Trust your child's appetite. Children will usually eat in order to get a reward or to escape punishment, but they may not necessarily like what they are eating. They may even end up disliking the food. In addition, forcing your child to eat may cause a lifelong overeating habit.

Find a substitute

There is always another food to replace the one your child is refusing. For example, if your child refuses milk, try other dairy products like cheese or yoghurt. If he dislikes chewing meat, try minced meat, fish, beans or tofu. And if he picks out the vegetables, offer him plenty of fruits.



Encourage family meals

Eat together with the family whenever possible. Seat your child at the table for meals and snacks; avoid distractions like watching television or playing with toys. For youngsters give them a booster seat so they can reach their food easily.

Serve “designer meals”

Try serving food in different ways, from the way it is cooked to how it is presented. For example, instead of chicken soup or porridge, try stir frying with gravy. You can also cut vegetables into different shapes like raw carrot sticks or cooked carrot coins to make eating fun.

Watch the fluids

Children have small tummies which can be filled easily with fluids (milk, juice, cordial, water), thus leaving less room for food. Limit fluids at least one hour before meals.

Make meals fun!

Mealtimes should be fun and relaxed. Avoid conflict and criticism at meal times and focus your attention on positives in your child's behaviour. Try giving foods different names, like “monster mash” for mashed potato etc.

Get them involved!

Involve your child in food selection and menu planning.

Take the opportunity to start nutrition education by explaining the function of nutrients found in common foods, eg milk makes bones and teeth stronger. Get your child involved in preparing meals. Children are more likely to try foods that they have helped prepared.

Encourage your child to self-feed and serve himself by spooning food from a serving bowl to their plate. Stock your kitchen with child-sized dishes and utensils. Even though spills are messy, it is part of being independent.

Feed themselves

Keep mealtimes regular and you may serve your child the same food he likes a few times a week with some variation.

Make it a routine

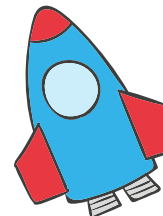
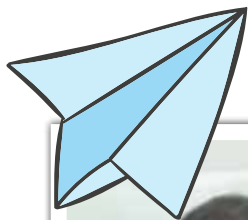
Relax and be patient during mealtimes. Your child would not intentionally starve himself. Most of the time, these are phases that kids go through and they will outgrow them later in life.

The Young Connection

Interacting with her little patients is what Dr Wendy Sinnathamby, Specialist in Paediatric Medicine and Consultant, Raffles Children Centre, enjoys thoroughly. She is married with a 16-year-old daughter, and likes discussing philosophy with her study group in her free time. Read on to learn more about the joy and challenges she faces as a paediatrician.

By Joanna Lee





because of continued close monitoring during the night, they were able to identify quickly when his health started to deteriorate in the early hours of the morning. I was called in quickly, and I made the decision to transfer him to a paediatric high dependency unit for closer monitoring. This turned out to be the right decision as he subsequently was diagnosed to have a very rare condition that caused him to have fits while he was being monitored.

Very often as paediatricians, we face parents who admit their children and request for minimal monitoring of their little ones during the night to avoid disturbance. It is however very important that they continue to have their parameters checked at regular intervals, as they are sick and their condition can quickly deteriorate unexpectedly. I am now firmer with this category of parents, insisting that my instructions are followed while the child is under my care. This is all done in their child's best interest.

I specialise in paediatric medicine because...

During my medical school training, I enjoyed my time in paediatrics the most. My interaction with the kids and the resilience that they show in the face of serious medical and surgical conditions has attracted me to specialise in this field.

I'm motivated by...

Seeing children recover from their illness very quickly and I thoroughly enjoy what I do. I cannot see myself in any other career!

One little known fact about being a paediatrician is...

Most of us are still very much like a kid at heart!

A typical work day for me...

My clinic starts at 8.30am, but I usually come to the hospital a bit earlier to do my rounds at the ward. On days when I am less busy, I get to leave the clinic before 6pm. Otherwise, I will need to be on-call, which doctors usually do so for a whole week. During those weeks, work is more hectic as I can get called to work at any time; sometimes several times during the night.

The most rewarding thing as a paediatrician is...

I think there are many rewarding moments as a paediatrician. For me, they include seeing a child bounce back to health after being very sick, and having parents entrusting me to care for their children's medical needs continuously. Receiving drawings and hand-made crafts done by my little patients, and getting a hug from them after a consult make my day.

The most challenging part of my job is...

Running a full day clinic after fulfilling a very busy overnight on-call duty.

A challenging case that I have come across is about...

A two-year-old child who had a three-day record of high fever associated with increasing lethargy but fewer other symptoms. He was understandably very clingy to his parents and would cry every time his parameters, such as temperature, heart rate and blood pressure, were checked.

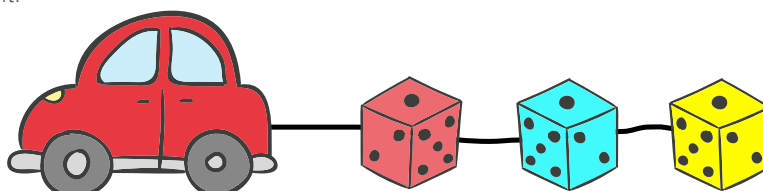
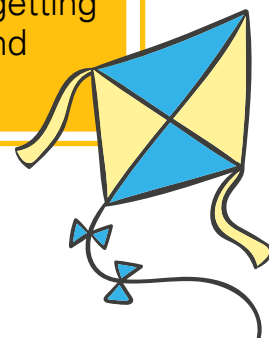
As he got upset with these checks, his parents were reluctant for him to continue having frequent monitoring. However, the nurses were firm and

Important tips that I would usually share with my young patients and their parents...

As I follow babies who are well from birth onwards with developmental checks and immunisations, I try to give parents appropriate general advice to re-establish proper feeding habits, tips to manage behaviour and as well as screen time.



I love having conversations with my little patients, even resorting to baby talk, and getting them to sing and dance for me.







**TECH
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TO

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Gone are the days when even owning a computer is a luxury. Now, every kid holds an electronic gadget with their eyes glued to the screen. Dr Chitra Ramalingam, Specialist in Paediatric Medicine & Consultant, Raffles Children Centre, shares the effects of technology on a growing child. **By Queenie Ho**



Technology Causes Problems

According to Dr Chitra, children learn to talk and communicate by interacting with other people. The first few years of their lives are crucial for their language development. This is when their brain is the most receptive to learning a new language and building communication pathways. Regular use of touchscreen platforms and entertainment media could also affect the fine motor coordination development in children due to lack of hands-on exploration.

The use of technology at a very early age, the time spent and the type of content watched become predictors of poor executive functioning. This includes impulse control, self-regulation, mental flexibility, as well as the ability to understand other peoples' thoughts and feelings in pre-schoolers. Other health risks include poor sitting posture and eye strain from staring at electronic screens for too long.

What is Considered Excessive?

Children below two years old are still developing cognitive, language, sensorimotor, and social-emotional skills, which require hands-on exploration and social interaction with trusted caregivers. As such the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) discourage media exposure for children younger than two years and recommends one hour per day screen time for children between two and five years old.



Technology has its Benefits

It's not all doom and gloom though. Digital and social media, when used in moderation, have its benefits. These include early learning, exposure to new ideas and knowledge, increased opportunities for social contact and support, and new opportunities to access important lessons and information.

"I would encourage parents to carefully choose educational and prosocial content, and engage with their children around technology. It will allow children to get the most out of their viewing. Choosing appropriate quality programmes can improve cognitive, linguistic, and social outcomes for three to five years old children," advised Dr Chitra.

Dr Chitra added, "Screen time should not compromise bonding time. Screen time together with your child can promote enhanced learning, greater interaction, and limit setting. Limit screen time to not more than one or two hours for children above two years old and periodically review the content that your child is watching. Parents should also encourage other interactive activities which promote brain development, such as playing and reading."



Eye Love Technology (Not)

Too much screen time leads to the development and worsening of myopia. In addition, high myopic individuals have an elevated risk of developing other sight threatening conditions like retinal detachment, glaucoma, cataracts, amblyopia (lazy eye) and a life-long dependence on spectacles. Dr Marcus Tan, Specialist in Ophthalmology and Aviation Medicine & Consultant, Raffles Eye Centre, suggests the following tips to prevent eye strain and myopia progression.



Take frequent short breaks

Ensure a three- to five-minute short break after engaging in near work for 30 to 40 minutes. Focus on a distant object or look out of the window during the break. To further decrease the eye strain, you can consider the following:

- Mobile / tablet devices should be at least 30cm away from their eyes. It is important to ensure adequate screen illumination with good room lighting. They should sit upright when using the devices.
- Computer screens should be at least 50cm away from the eyes with a screen filter to reduce glare and reflection from other light sources. Good room lighting also helps.
- In general, the television screen should be at least 3m away from the eyes. However, your child should sit further if the screen is big. The centre of the screen should be at eye level and screen time should similarly be limited.

Ensure proper spectacles care for optimal visual performance

- To prevent scratching of spectacle lenses, do not use tissue paper or T-shirts to wipe spectacles.
- Wash or blow off any dust or grit on their spectacles and do not place spectacles with the lenses facing on the table.
- Use both hands to put on and take off their spectacles to avoid distorting the spectacles frame.
- Store the spectacles in their protective case when not in use.

1

More play is good for the eyes but only if it is outdoors

Studies show that spending time daily on outdoor activities may help to protect your child's eyes against the development and progression of myopia. Avoid the mid-day sun and wear a cap or sunglasses to protect harmful ultraviolet rays when outdoors. In addition, outdoor activities can have an overall health benefit for your children.

See pages 34 and 35 for ideas on outdoor activities.

2

3

Have an eye review once a year

Similar to dental checks once in six months, children should have their eyes checked at least once a year. Children in Singapore's primary schools have an annual eye assessment by the School Health Service. If your child missed the check, they can visit an optometrist for their eye check.

4

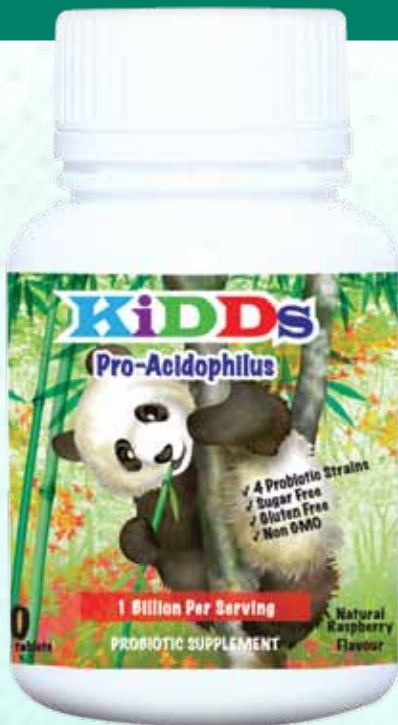
Can I prevent my child's spectacles from getting thicker?

Visit an ophthalmologist if your child's myopia is progressing rapidly. An assessment will be conducted to determine if your child would benefit from either an accurate spectacle prescription or the use of myopia progression eye drops. Contact lenses and refractive surgery should be avoided in children.

5



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PARENTING THE APP WAY

We are living in a digital age when everyone has a smartphone. Wouldn't it be great if we could parent our kids with the help of some clever apps? Look no further. Here's our pick of six types of apps to consider at different stages of your parenting. **By Magdalene Lee**



Baby Tracker

For new parents

Record each feeding, diaper change, and sleep schedule so you are in the know when it comes to your baby's important information. Enter your baby's measurement data and track how he is progressing over weeks, months and years! Mark every milestone of your baby, be it his first smile, first tooth, first steps and more, with photos and notes.



Baby monitor

For 'helicopter' parents

Can't bear to be away from your baby or just need to know how well he is sleeping? Use these apps to be in the know no matter whether you are in the next room or ten thousand miles away from home. Connect digitally to see and hear your child, even talk to or soothe your baby remotely.



Family Organiser

For busy parents

Coordinate the family's schedule across family members and different mobile devices. Share spelling lists to shopping lists, medical appointments to family appointments, piano lessons to swimming classes easily. You will not need to be late or miss out another important date with this.



Chore Manager

For messy homes

Inspired to start your kids on chores but unsure how to start? Try Chore Monster to encourage your child. Use in conjunction with the Mothership app to approve chores and provide rewards. In time, these chores will become habits that will last the child a lifetime.



Period Tracker

For family planning

Are you planning to grow your family? Or you have no wish for another child? Use this app to track your cycle so you will not be taken by surprise.



Artwork Management

For arty kids

Can't decide if you should dump or store your child's artwork? Try Keepy or Artkive to save you the headache by capturing the artwork and storing it digitally so you have no qualms tossing out the artwork. Hurray, declutter!

Family Fun Outdoors

Physical activities are important especially for growing kids. Outdoor activities enable them to learn and explore the environment, while exposure to sunlight and natural elements can contribute to bone development and building stronger immunity. Here are some suggestions of outdoor physical fun that is suitable for the whole family.

By Queenie Ho

Cycling



Cycling is a great activity to do as a family. You get to exercise and enjoy fresh air. You can cycle near your neighbourhood or rent bicycles at some of the bigger parks like East Coast Park. Now with bike sharing services like ofo, oBike and Mobike, there are fewer reasons to say no to a cycling trip.

Visit the Zoo



Bringing learning outdoors is a great way for children to acquire knowledge of the world. Take a walk in the zoo to find out more about animals and their habitat. Alternatively, there are a number of animal farms in Singapore that will keep your child occupied and interested.

Sand and Water Fun



Singapore is surrounded by water and we have a number of beaches and swimming pools that are open to the public. Bring your child for some beach activities like building sandcastles, or just chill under the sun. Water playgrounds are also great alternatives to bring some fun to your kids to expend their endless energy.



Island-Hop

Singapore is surrounded by small islands that provide a getaway from the city centre. Pulau Ubin, St John's Island and Chek Jawa are just some suggestions for families to explore and bond.

Wash the Car



If you own a car, get your child to help in cleaning the family car. It is a fun exercise and keeps the little hands busy. Children love this activity as it gives them an excuse to get wet in our hot weather. And what more, it helps save money!

Exploring on Foot



Hiking is an inexpensive activity that allows the family to bond through nature. There are many places in Singapore that you can explore on foot. Parks like Labrador Nature Reserve, Hort Park, Punggol Waterway Park and MacRitchie Reservoir Park are great spots for exploring nature and the list does not end here. End the hike with a picnic for some great family bonding and build memories your kids will remember.

Safety Matters !

While outdoor fun in the sun is good, Dr Chong Jin Ho, Specialist in Paediatric Medicine & Consultant, Raffles Children Centre highlights the importance of keeping your child safe while out and about.

- Always wear proper gear (eg a bike helmet when cycling, supportive footwear when engaging in sport activities.)
- Keep an eye during water play. Water safety is important as they can accidentally fall into the water; causing difficulty in breathing and injuries.
- Remember to hydrate. Children playing outdoors are going to sweat profusely and it is important to replenish water intake. Don't forget to drink more when out in the sun.
- Protect yourself against harmful UV rays. Singapore, being near to the equator, is sunny all year round. To prevent sunburn and other skin problems, using sunscreen is essential. Choose one with UVB Protection, SPF 30 or higher, UVA Protection or PA +++, and is water resistant. For better protection, slather on sunscreen generously 30 minutes before going outdoors. Re-apply every few hours.



How Much To Drink

1 - 2 YEARS OLD

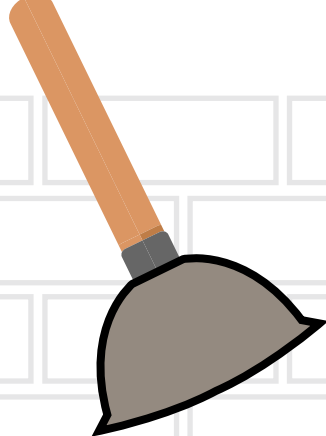
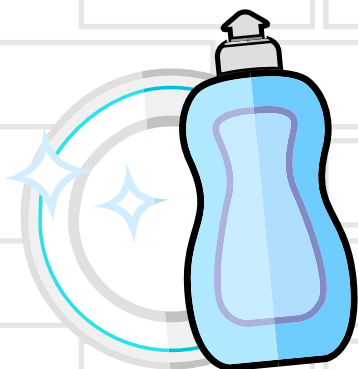
Glasses* of water per day:	1 - 3
Glasses* of total fluid* intake per day:	4 - 6

3 - 6 YEARS OLD

Glasses* of water per day:	3 - 5
Glasses* of total fluid* intake per day:	5 - 7

*One glass = 250ml

* Total fluid intake is the total amount of fluid intake from food (such as soup and porridge) and beverages (such as water and milk)



Little Helpers

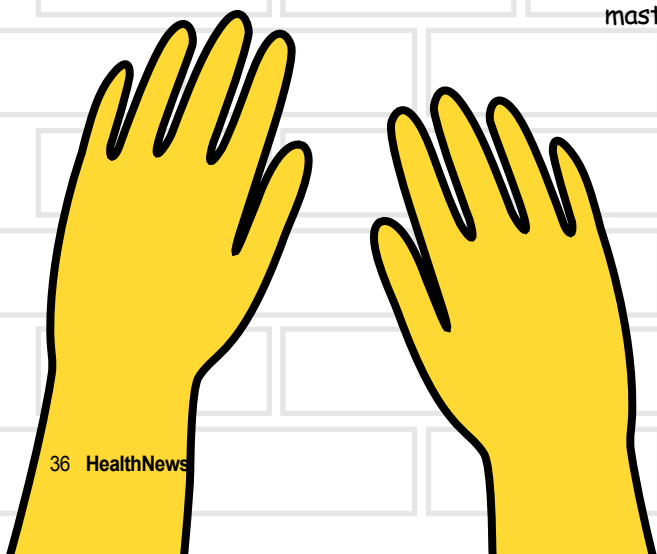
Magdalene Lee

What is home if we do not pitch in to help one another? According to Dr Chitra Ramalingam, Specialist in Paediatric Medicine & Consultant, Raffles Children Centre, doing chores has benefits for our children.

"Doing chores creates a sense of responsibility, builds confidence and satisfaction that your child is helping everyone in the household. Children as young as two years old can begin to learn life-skills that will enable them to be productive. What's more, we parents can get help from the mountain of chores and in turn maintain our sanity.", said Dr Chitra.

In addition, structure and routine can help build your child's self-control. It also gives them experience of communicating clearly, negotiating and working as a team. In a week's time, you will notice your child feeling more successful and confident as they master new chores, and the entire family will have a sense of accomplishment at the work that's done.

Dr Chitra suggests that you can start your child slowly with one to two tasks and gradually add on once your child has mastered them.



✓ Age Appropriate **CHORES**

Find out what age appropriate chores your child can do.

Toddler (2 to 3 years old)



- Pick up toys and books
- Put laundry into laundry basket
- Dress self
- Wipe up messes
- Help feed pets

Pre-schooler (4 to 6 years old)



- All previous tasks
- Clear and set table for meals
- Match socks and fold
- Put away laundry
- Tidy room
- Make bed

Primary school (7 to 10 years old)



- All previous tasks
- Sweep and vacuum floors
- Take out the trash
- Clean bathroom sinks and counters
- Help with meal preparation and make simple meals (eg sandwiches)
- Sort and fold laundry

Tweens (11 years old and up)



- All previous tasks
- Help with food preparation
- Clean toilets
- Vacuum and mop floors
- Do laundry
- Walk pets
- Clean out refrigerator

Ask the Experts

Q: My child eats everything in school but hardly anything at home. Should I be worried?

A: It is common for children to eat better in childcare centres or school because there is "peer pressure" to eat together with their friends. In addition, teachers tend to praise the child who finishes up his plate of food. While when with the family, the child may try to manipulate the parents into giving him foods that he likes by refusing to eat in the first place. Parents should be firm when it comes to deciding what the child will be eating. Prepare meals with suitable dishes for everyone in the family, including the child. Avoid distractions such as TV, books or toys during mealtime so that the child focuses on eating and the family interacts through sharing of food



Dr Chu Hui Ping

Specialist in Paediatric Medicine & Consultant
Raffles Children Centre

Q: Is it important to start reading early for children?

A: Yes. Reading to your children not only improves the cognitive, speech and language development, it also plays a huge role in the social and emotional development of the child. It helps promote bonding with parents and caregivers. It also inculcates love for lifelong reading. Reading and sharing stories can spark the child's imagination, stimulate curiosity and help in his brain development. Reading can also help the child develop early literacy skills such as the ability to listen and understand words.



Dr Chitra Ramalingam

Specialist in Paediatric Medicine & Consultant
Raffles Children Centre

Q: Why does my child get frequent nose bleeds? How can I treat it at home?

A: Most nosebleeds in children arise from nose picking and when the membrane lining of the nose is inflamed from common cold or allergic rhinitis. Rarely, it may be due to a bleeding disorder, hypertension or tumour. Foreign bodies (eg small batteries) may also give rise to nose bleeds but there will also be a nasal discharge. Nosebleeds may be treated by squeezing the nose tightly for at least 10 minutes. Do not tilt the head backwards as swallowed blood is irritating to the stomach. The old tradition of applying ice pack on the nose is also not helpful.



Dr Tan Mein Chuen

Specialist in Neonatology & Consultant
Raffles Children Centre

Q: I have problem feeding my child medicine as she does not like the taste of it. How can I make her consume her medicine without forcing her?

A: Many medications can be mixed in milk, and most of the time this makes it more palatable to the child. Apart from mixing medications, parents can consider giving something sweet to the child after the dose of medication. This can be in the form of a sweet for older children or a spoonful of honey (not recommended for infants) or fruit juice. When feeding medications, if some children refuse to take the medicine from a spoon or bottle, an effective and safe way would be to use a syringe and aim it at the tongue and side of the mouth, not at the back of the throat. Do not force a spoon into a child's mouth.

Dr Christelle Tan

Specialist in Paediatric Medicine & Consultant
Raffles Specialists - Holland V

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We aim to empower you with the latest health news and tips, as well as for you to learn more about the people behind Raffles. Stay connected with us on social media.



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Planning a #trip with your #baby? Be prepared before you board that #plane! Due to change in air pressure during take-off and landing, this can lead to changes in an infant's middle ear pressure and thus cause earache.

Prepare a pacifier for your child to suck on to reduce this pressure. Alternatively, prepare to breastfeed or bottle-feed your child.
#raffleshospital #rafflesbaby



 Raffles Medical Group

Young children, before the age of two, get as many as eight to 10 colds a year.


"This is not a sign of a weak immune system but simply that the growing child is being exposed to many viruses," advised Dr Wong Wei Mon, Senior Family Physician, Raffles Medical – Raffles Holland V.
#RafflesBaby




 Twitter @RafflesMedGrp

#Reading to your #child has a lot of benefits. Not only does it help promote #bonding and strong relationship with #parents, it also inculcates one's love for lifelong reading.
#Rafflesbaby

Did You Know?
Reading and sharing stories with children helps them differentiate between "real" and "make believe".



 Raffles Hospital videos.....

Teething

Something every kid will go through.

Teething happens to every child but this can sometimes become a concern to parents. Find out how you can handle this situation as we debunk some common myths about teething in this video.



Join the Raffles Mummy Support Group for parenting tips and advice.

We want to hear from you – tweet, like, subscribe or share a photo with us! You can also write to us at healthnews@rafflesmedical.com and share how we can better engage you.

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