



THE HSC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
Health Services for Children
with Special Needs, Inc.

HEALTH Connection

SPRING
2019

HSCSN's Newsletter for Families with Children and Young Adults with Special Health Care Needs

Visit us online at hshealth.org/health-plan

Pediatric Diabetes: A Team Effort

Parents of children with diabetes want to do everything they can to keep their children safe and healthy. Rest assured that your child's doctor is your partner in this. By working together, you will be able to create a manageable care plan for your child.

Seeing your child's doctor regularly is the

best way to catch problems early. Do your part by making and keeping all of your child's scheduled appointments.

You and your child will visit your child's diabetes doctor about every three months. Make the most of these visits by communicating clearly. Repeat back

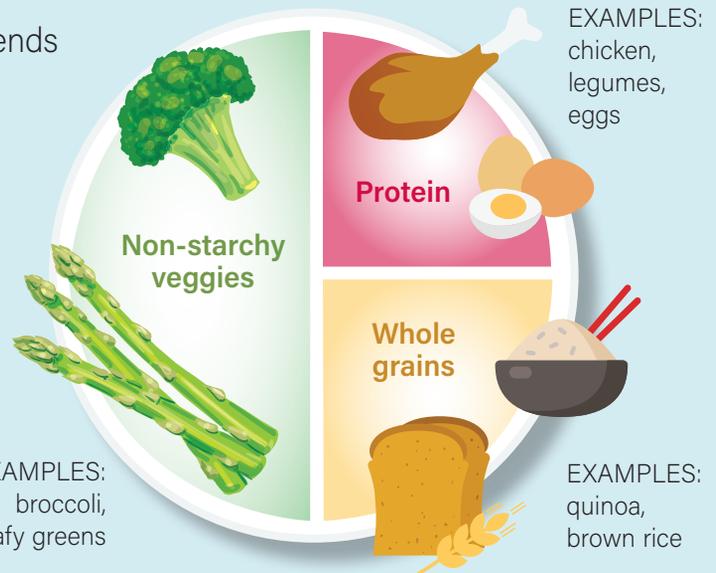
important information in your own words to make sure that you understood it.

In between visits, make sure you do your part by helping your child eat well. Follow doctor's orders to help control your child's blood sugar.

A Healthy Plate for Diabetes

The American Diabetes Association recommends the "Create Your Plate" formula to make meal-planning easy for people with diabetes.

1. Fill half of a nine-inch plate with non-starchy veggies, like steamed broccoli or sauteed spinach.
2. Fill a quarter of the plate with a lean protein like fish or chicken. Beans and legumes are good vegetarian options.
3. Fill the remaining quarter of the plate with a whole grain, such as barley, brown rice, or whole wheat pasta. Try to avoid refined grains like white rice or pasta.



Being physically active is great for diabetes and your overall health.

Exercise can:

- Help you lose weight or maintain a healthy weight
- Lower your blood sugar levels
- Lower your risk for heart disease
- Improve your sleep
- Control blood pressure and improve cholesterol



Ready or Not, Here Comes Transition



Are you the parent of a teen with autism or other special needs? The big transition to adulthood is right around the corner. Your child should start preparing early—ideally, by age 14. You can even start earlier. Here are some questions you may want to ask your child’s health care providers and teachers to make the process easier.

Health care: When should your child switch to a doctor who treats adults? Look for a doctor who understands your child’s needs. Some neurologists and psychiatrists treat adults with autism or other conditions. But not all do. Check with the doctor’s staff before setting up an appointment.

Education: Does your child want to go on to higher education? Options include trade schools, community colleges, and four-year colleges.

Work: Does your child want to start working straight out of high school? Some young adults with special needs benefit from vocational rehab. This type of program provides job training, counseling, and placement.

Life skills: Is there a life skills program in your area? These programs teach skills like budgeting, shopping, and using public transportation.

Housing: Is your child ready to move away from home? Some young adults with special needs live on their own. Others live in a group home that provides extra support. Still others live at home but go to a day program for adults with disabilities.

Keep in mind: Many services and programs have long waiting lists. That is another good reason to think ahead and sign up your teen early.

PAIN IN PREGNANCY: When It Is Serious

Your body changes a lot during pregnancy. Some changes are not fun—like morning sickness and body aches. But how can you know if you need to see your doctor? If you have signs of these serious conditions, call your doctor right away:

Ectopic pregnancy: Signs include bleeding and pain in the abdomen, pelvis, or shoulder. Some bleeding and spotting are normal. But if a fertilized egg implants outside the uterus, you and your baby could be in danger.

Urinary tract infection: Burning or pain when you urinate is a common sign of an infection. So is feeling the urge to go right away after urinating. If you have either of these signs or see blood in your urine, you may have a urinary tract infection (UTI). It is vital to seek treatment for a UTI, since it may lead to a kidney infection—which could trigger early labor.

Gestational diabetes: Signs of this complication include

feeling very thirsty, hungry, or tired. Gestational diabetes increases your risk for preeclampsia and delivering a premature baby.

High blood pressure: Your blood pressure will be checked at your prenatal visits. If your blood pressure is high, your baby may not be able to get enough oxygen and nutrients. You are also at risk for premature birth, preeclampsia, and serious placenta complications.

HSCSN Prenatal Care Services

If you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant, please let your Care Manager know as soon as possible. Your Care Manager can help you and your baby get the care you need. Doctors can spot and treat health problems early. Together we can help you give your baby a healthy start in life.



LITTLE BOOKWORMS

Reading to Your Kids Early Has Benefits that Last a Lifetime

Do you remember begging for just one more bedtime story? Then you know how wonderful a book can be. It is never too early to start reading to your kids.

BABIES AND BOOKS

You might wonder how much babies can understand. It is true they may not know exactly what you are saying. But this is a time when their brains are growing quickly.

The first few years set the stage for the rest of their lives—and reading is an important part of that. It strengthens their language skills, even when they are little. Down the road, those early skills lead to greater success in school.

But the benefits do not stop there. A recent study in *Pediatrics* found that reading books to kids when they are young can improve their social skills and behavior.

WHAT TO READ AND WHEN

Wondering what books will work best for your kids? Here are some ideas based on your child's age:

12 months and younger: Thick cardboard books are good for babies. Look for a size they can hold.

1 to 2 years: Now is a great time to read books with sounds in them. You can also ask your child simple questions about the stories.

2 to 3 years: This can be a good time to start a bedtime reading routine.

Keep reading aloud to your kids, even after they can read for themselves. It is a few minutes a day that you have together. Try different types of books. Try nursery rhymes, fairy tales, mysteries, and even poetry. Always keep it fun so that children do not think of reading as a chore. Sometimes that means reading the same book over and over again if that is what your child picks!

Keep Your Benefits Call Today!

Is this the month you lose Medicaid eligibility? If you lose eligibility, you will not be able to:

take your child to the doctor; get medicine your child needs; use transportation services.

HSCSN can help so that you do not lose your medical benefits. Call us Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at **202-467-2737**.



THE HSC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Health Services for Children with Special Needs, Inc.

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For reasonable accommodations, please call (202) 467-2708.

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Summer Camp Fun!

Camp Breathe Happy offered by Breathe DC

Camp Breathe Happy is a summer camp for children with asthma. Kids learn asthma control and self-management. This is a free camp for children 8 to 12 years old. Children must be first-time campers at Camp Breathe Happy.

Date: July 21–July 25, 2019

Location: 4-H Patuxent Campground
18405 Queen Anne Rd.

Upper Marlboro, MD 20774

Contact: Call 202-574-6789 or email Breathe DC at info@breathedc.org.

This camp is for kids ages 6 to 18 with physical disabilities. Campers must be able to propel their own wheelchair. No sports experience is necessary. Choose one or both weeks.

Date: *Week 1:* July 20–August 3

Week 2: August 6–10, 2019 (TBD)

Location: Trinity University

125 Michigan Ave NE

Washington, DC 20017

Contact: Call Robyn Cohen at (202) 832-4400 x1448 or email rwinston@hshealth.org.

FitCampNation Summer Camp

FitCampNation teaches kids practical ways to get fit and stay fit. Each session includes two visits to the Wilson Aquatic Center. Other activities include learning how to stretch, how to eat healthy, and daily fun runs! Kids in grades 4 through 7 are welcome.

Date: Last week in June, full month of July, Monday–Friday 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

Location: Deal Middle School - 3815 Fort Drive, Washington DC 20016

Contact: Call Neal Downing at 202-327-4875 or email Fitcampnation1@gmail.com.

HSC Pediatric Center, Kids in Action, Adaptive Sports Camp

Join us for the 4th annual Adaptive Sports Camp. We partner with National Rehab Hospital for this camp. Activities include:

- wheelchair basketball
- wheelchair tennis
- adaptive fitness
- cycling
- wheelchair lacrosse
- boccia
- badminton
- swimming
- crafts
- outings
- so much more!

If you do not speak and/or read English, please call 202-467-2737

between 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. A representative will assist you. English

Si no habla o lee inglés, llame al 202-467-2737 entre las 7:00 a.m. y las 5:30

p.m. Un representante se complacerá en asistirle. Spanish

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Nếu bạn không nói và/hoặc đọc tiếng Anh, xin gọi 202-467-2737 từ 7 giờ 00 sáng đến 5 giờ 30 chiều. Sẽ có người đại diện giúp bạn. Vietnamese

如果您不能講和/或不能閱讀英語，請在上午 7:00 到下午 5:30 之間給 202-467-2737 打電話，我們會有代表幫助您。Chinese

영어로 대화를 못하시거나 영어를 읽지 못하시는 경우, 오전 7시 00분에서 오후 5시 30분 사이에 202-467-2737번으로 전화해 주시기 바랍니다. 담당 직원이 도와드립니다. Korean

Si vous ne parlez pas ou lisez l'anglais, s'il vous plaît appeler 202-467-2737 entre 7:00 du matin et 5:30 du soir. Un représentant vous aidera. French



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GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR