



A Newsletter for Parents

5 Year Check Up

Well Child Appointments can be made online at AustinRegionalClinic.com.



Your child's height, weight, and BMI along with health screens and immunizations performed will be in the **After Visit Summary (AVS)** that your provider or nurse will give you at the end of the visit. You can also view this information on MyChartARC.com

NUTRITION

Parents need to be positive role models in both food selection and amount of food consumed. High-fat and high-sugar foods should be limited. Limiting high calorie foods begins in the grocery store. Avoid buying unhealthy food. Sugared beverages (liquid candy), sweetened cereals (breakfast candy), cookies, pastries, ice cream, and pizza should be rare treats.

Remember the saying **"Parents provide and the child decides."** As the parent, continue to be responsible for what the family eats, when the family eats, and where the family eats. Your child's job is to decide how much of the correct portion to eat. You may see your child's food intake varies with meals, but in general it will be consistent over the course of 24 hours. Children are responsible for whether they eat what is offered or wait until the next meal/snack. Do not force your child to eat more or reward the eating of healthy fruits or vegetables with dessert. Do not cater to your child's likes and dislikes.

Continue to have scheduled meal and snack times, typically 3 meals and 2 snacks a day. Parents should serve meals restaurant style (parents portion food onto the plates for the children) instead of family style (everyone serving themselves from food on the table).

Family meals, with everyone sitting together at the table, are important.

Many families with children this age make separate meals for individual family members. This trend may be due to parents catering to children's food requests or be a consequence of frequent eating out where everyone orders different meals. Unfortunately separate meals do not help children learn to eat a variety of healthy foods. Prepare only one

meal for all family members. Keep offering healthy food to your family. It can take up to 12-15 times of presenting a vegetable before a child will eat it. Never force a child to eat a vegetable. This will create a battle and control issue.

Take your time to eat. It takes your brain 20 minutes to receive fullness cues from your stomach. Aim for your child to take at least 20 minutes to eat their meals. If your child asks for more after a meal, wait the full 20 minutes, and if they are still hungry, offer them half-portion seconds.

Do not use food as your only reward for good behavior. A trip to the park, playground, or some other special time spent together are alternative options your child may enjoy.

Parents should prepare healthy snacks. Examples of nutritious snack foods include fruits, vegetables such as carrot/celery sticks with hummus, whole wheat toast or crackers with cheese or peanut butter, yogurt, low-fat cottage cheese, and bran muffins. Try to include fruits and vegetables in snacks and include a protein (like peanut butter, milk, or low fat yogurt) to increase your child's fullness. Hungry children are not in a position to make good nutritional choices. Prepare their snack in advance.

Avoid allowing your child to graze throughout the day. This leads to unhealthy habits that can contribute to overeating. If your child asks for a snack and it is not yet your scheduled time for a snack, talk or play with them as a method of distraction.

Utilize the MyPlate visual guide to create well-balanced meals and snacks for your family.



Healthy Habits Tips

Remember the message "7-5-2-1-0" for what healthy habits are important for your child.

- **7: Eat breakfast 7 days a week.** Eating breakfast jump-starts the metabolism, improves school performance, and prevents children from getting too hungry and overeating later in the day---habits that lead to excess weight. Simplify breakfast. Consider pre-filling a bowl of cereal the night before (remember, try to eat breakfast cereals with at least 2 grams of fiber and less than 9 grams of sugar per serving) or get a piece of string cheese and a piece of fruit ready the night before.
- **5: Your child should eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day.** By making ½ their plate fruits and vegetables at meals and including fruits and vegetables for snack, your child will get the needed amount of fruits and vegetables.
- **2: Do not let your child spend more than 2 hours on total screen time per day** (TV, video games, recreational computer time, tablets or phones).
- **1: Have your child participate in at least 1 hour of physical activity per day.** This should be the activity of choice that your child prefers and often means just playing outside. Plan for unstructured, outdoor play time every day.
- **0: Encourage your child to drink almost no sugary drinks.** Soda, sports drinks, fruit drinks, and even 100% fruit juice

(collectively called sugar-sweetened beverages) all contain a large amount of sugar which contributes greatly to excess weight. Consider not buying or bringing sugar-sweetened beverages into your home. **Remember 2% milk is not considered low-fat.**

Children 5 years of age need to drink 2 cups of low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim milk) or consume the equivalent from other milk products. (e.g. yogurt or cheese).

This amount will help children meet their calcium needs.

Is my child overweight/obese?

Contrary to the belief that young children will “grow out of it,” excess weight persists into later life and increases the risk for weight-related diseases in both childhood and adulthood. Body Mass Index (BMI) is widely used to help define overweight and obese children. BMI compares height and weight and varies by age and sex. A BMI between the 85th and 95th percentile is defined as overweight, and a BMI above the 95th is defined as obese. BMI and BMI % will be shared at your child’s visit. Do not hesitate to ask your child’s doctor about any concerns you have about your child’s weight or eating habits.

MEDIA ALERT

Screen Time Guidance

Playing on phones and tablets has opened up many new opportunities to create and connect. However, we now understand there seems to be harm, especially with prolonged screen time. Children experience language delays, cognitive delays, and social/emotional delays with prolonged screen time. Executive planning (the ability to control impulses, regulate one’s own behavior and the ability to switch between things they are doing) is also affected. Parents should seek out high-quality educational products (for example, Sesame Street and PBS Kids) or use resources that rate available app and movie choices (for example, Common Sense Media).

To promote responsible screen use, try these strategies to avoid common pitfalls:

- **Make sure that other priorities come first.** Exercise, family time, reading time, and a regular bedtime should be part of your child’s daily routine. Prevent screen time from replacing or delaying any of those.
- **No screens during meals** (even background television viewing is problematic) and no screen use within one

hour of bedtime.

- **Avoid using the phone or tablet to calm your child.** This rewards their whining or crying. You might say, when you are calm we can play “I spy” or another game together.
- **Remove all screens out of the bedroom where your child sleeps starting the hour before bedtime.** Set up a charging station in another area of the house.
- Any auto-advance feature (such as immediately playing the next video in a series) should be turned off so that you are helping your child choose each one they watch.

Goals for media use at this age should include:

- **Share the apps and shows that your child is watching.** This gives caregivers the ability to teach, to demonstrate limit-setting and promote social interaction
- **Monitor all your children’s media.** Test-drive applications before allowing your child to use them. Look for ones that show behaviors you would like to see in your child. Later, ask your child what they think of what they saw.
- **Create “unplugged” spaces in the home.** This might be your place where you eat meals or the place where you read together.
- **Think about media limits for every family member.** Your own screen use is a strong predictor of how frequently your children use screens. More parental use of screens leads to less interaction with children, less active play with children, and more parent-child conflict. The American Academy of Pediatrics has released a Media Use Toolkit, which can help parents set goals for your individual family. More information is available at: www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan.

SLEEP

Sleep is still vitally important for helping children this age learn and behave. Typically children sleep 10-12 hours out of a day at this age. If your child is still napping, then they will likely have a shorter nighttime sleep.

Children this age thrive when there is a routine, meaning the same pattern of things happen every night before sleep. A great routine is Brush, Book, and Bed. When you brush teeth, read a book, and then tuck into bed every night, your child will become calm as they recognize the pattern. This is especially true if you tuck them into bed



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at the same time every night, weekends included.

DEVELOPMENT

Social

Age five is a time of major social growth. Friendships and socialization are about to become a key component of your child’s life. Issues of self-esteem and independence will be tested as your child develops a sense of place with friends and family. Five-year-olds are beginning to move away from the magical world of early childhood and into the logical world of older children.

A major theme in the life of a five-year-old is “I can do it myself.” This independence and the self-help skills that accompany this independence are very important in preparation for kindergarten. Most beginning kindergartners are able to:

- Take care of toilet needs without help.
- Be away from parents for a few hours at a time.
- Speak to and be understood by other children and adults.
- Play well with at least one other child, with minimal fighting or crying.
- Willingly engage in a new activity.
- Listen quietly while being read to.
- Carry out simple instructions.

To grow your child’s social skills and prepare them for the year ahead:

- Introduce your child to his or her school. Take your child to the school they will attend. Play on the playground. If possible, meet the teacher and visit the classroom. Be positive; your child will feel comfortable if he or she sees that you are also. Encourage respect for teachers and school rules.
- Provide opportunities for supervised play with children his or her age. Help your child develop a vocabulary of politeness...

"please, thank you, excuse me." Encourage kindness and respect by setting a good example and praising your child and other children when they are being kind and respectful.

- Begin to create a sense of family responsibilities. Each family needs every person to help out around the house. Your child can begin to learn to do jobs around the house, such as putting dirty clothes in a basket or putting away their toys. Encourage and praise them when they are good helpers.

Taking Time to Improve Relationships

To help grow your relationship with your child, make sure to have a bit of time every day where you are playing with them. This play should be directed by your child. When you do this for even 5-10 minutes, they are more like to follow your directions about your family rules. It's important to set and keep family rules to keep your child safe and to teach them respectfulness and kindness. When your child breaks a family rule, say in simple words the rule that they broke. Then tell them the consequence of their actions. Keep the consequence tied to the action and make sure it's a consequence you can live with and remember to enforce.

If your child challenges your authority, express disapproval, but try not to be emotional. If calm disapproval doesn't work, a time-out is the most effective form of discipline. Time-out means having your child separate from you and others for just a few minutes. Afterwards, make sure that they understand that you disapprove of a particular thing done, but avoid saying your child is "mean" or "bad." Describe what they did wrong. Clearly separate the behavior from the person. Try not to get upset yourself.

- Slapping or spanking your child for bad behaviors does not work to change their behavior. Read more about other things you can do to avoid spanking at www.cdc.gov/parents/essentials.



Movement Skills

At age five most children are mastering how to kick, hop, throw, and catch. Unfortunately, most children in this age group still have to

focus on keeping balance, so don't expect these skills to be perfect. Visual tracking

skills are still quite immature at this age. You must toss the ball directly to your child in order for him or her to have a chance to catch it. Some children don't catch well until 7 or 8 years of age. T-ball is a sport that adapts well to this visual tracking deficit by providing a stationary ball to swing at. The goals of team sports for this age should be to learn how to play the sport, develop basic skills, and have a good time.

Language

Intellectually and verbally, a five-year-old's self-expression and vocabulary develop rapidly. Your five-year-old's speech should be completely understandable, although some articulation (pronunciation) problems may persist. They should be able to pronounce all vowels and the following consonant sounds: b, d, g, h, k, m, n, ng, p, w, y (yellow). The following consonant sounds may still be difficult, but should be mastered by age 6: f, l, sh, th, v. By age 7 all consonant sounds should be mastered. The following sounds may take until age 7 to be mastered: ch, soft g as in George, r, s, th, wh, z.

Ready for reading

You can launch your child on the right course for school success. Keep reading with your child every day, for at least 20 minutes. When sharing a book together, model finger-point reading. Touch the words as you read left-to-right. Children should be learning that the letters on the page tell the story. Talk about the story you read together, too. You might discuss your child's favorite parts in the story and ask questions about what happened.

By five years, many children can recognize most letters. Build your child's awareness of letters. When you have moments at a stop light or moments of waiting at a store, point out letters around you or play rhyming games. Talk about the sounds the letters make. Start with the easy ones to pick up such as "mmm" and "sss."

Body Talk

As your child has grown to understand more about their world, they will likely begin to ask harder questions. Some of those questions might be about where babies come from and about their private parts. Some issues your child may ask about include:

"How did I get in your tummy?"

"Where was I before I got in your tummy?"

"How come girls don't have a penis?"

Typically in the preschool years, your child may begin to show an interest in how



Being able to recite the alphabet or count is great, but readiness for kindergarten has more to do with being able to pay attention, follow instructions, and get along with other children.

things work. These are not adult sexual thoughts, but signs of normal curiosity. Know that these discussions will likely be ongoing over the course of their lives, rather than one time conversations. You will share more and more factual information as they get older. However, your child needs to learn what is all right to do and what is not. Setting limits to exploration is really a family matter. You may decide to teach your child the following:

- Interest in genital organs is healthy and natural.
- Nudity and sexual play in public are not alright.
- No other person, including even close friends and relatives, may touch her "private parts." The exceptions are 1) doctors and nurses during physical exams (but stress to your child that doctors and nurses need to have a parent in the room and ask permission from the child) and 2) her own parents when they are trying to find the cause of any pain in the genital area.

When your child begins to ask questions, the following might make it easier for both of you:

- Don't laugh or giggle, even if the question is cute. Your child shouldn't be made to feel ashamed for their curiosity.
- Be brief. Don't go into a long explanation. Answer in simple terms.
- Be honest. Use proper names for all body parts. For example, you can respond, "Well, you weren't in my tummy, but you were in a special place in my body called the uterus."

If you are uneasy talking about sex or answering certain questions, be honest about that too. Consider asking a relative, close family friend, or your doctor to help talk to your child.



DENTAL CARE

The following strategies can help prevent tooth problems:

- Brush your child's teeth with a soft nylon toothbrush twice a day using a small amount (pea-sized) of a fluoride-containing toothpaste. Teach them to spit out the toothpaste after brushing.
- Make sure to brush right after eating sticky-sugary foods. These include raisins, sticky candies or gums, dried fruit, gummi "fruit snacks," or gummi vitamins.
- Drink fluoride-supplemented water.
- For patients insured by Medicaid, you can find a dental provider for your child www.tmhp.com, or calling the THSteps Hotline at 877-847-8377.

SAFETY

Most injuries are preventable. More children die of injuries than of all diseases combined. At age 5 your child is learning to do many things that can cause serious injury, such as riding a bicycle. Although children learn fast, they still cannot judge what is safe. You must protect your child.

Car safety

Children up to 4'9" need to be in a full car seat or in a booster seat. The safest place for children is in the backseat of a car. Children should not sit in the front seat of a car until 13 years of age.

Your child is in danger of being hit by a car if he or she darts out into the street while playing. Take your child to the playground or park to play. Show your child the curb and teach them to always stop at the curb and never cross the street without a grown-up.

Do not allow your child to play in the driveways. Walk behind your car before you backup your car to be sure no one is behind you. You cannot always see your child



Children up to four feet nine inches tall need to be restrained in a booster seat.

through the rear view mirror. We do recommend cars with backup cameras for families with children.

Bike Safety

Make sure your child always wears a helmet while riding a bike, scooter, or skateboard. Parents must wear helmets also.

Teach your child to ride on sidewalks. A 5-year-old is too young to ride in the street safely.

Be sure that your child's bike is the right size. Your child must be able to place the balls of both feet on the ground when sitting on the seat with hands on the handlebars. Your child's bike should have coaster brakes. Five-year-olds are often not able to use hand brakes correctly.

Prevent Drownings

Here in Central Texas swimming is often the only way to exercise in the summer. Teach your children to swim to lower their risk of drowning. Even with a lifeguard on duty, make sure that one adult is designated watcher of your children. Do this during swimming parties with children as well. Children fall in easily and a child can drown even though no one hears anything out of the ordinary. Use Coast-Guard approved life jackets if your child is boating or near waterways. If you have a swimming pool, fence it on all sides with a fence at least 4 feet high, and be sure the gates are self-latching. Most children drown when they wander out of the house and fall into a pool that is not fenced off from the house. Learn more about swim safety in Central Texas at www.colinshope.org.

Prevent Burns and Excessive Sun Exposure

All homes should have smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. Change the batteries twice a year on a date you'll remember, such as Daylight Saving Time and Standard Time change dates.

Avoid the sun during the hours of 10am to 4pm. If outside, stay in the shade, use a hat to protect your child's face, and use a sunscreen. Sunscreen with UVA and UVB protection is best. Sun exposure during childhood can cause skin cancer and premature aging of the skin later in life.

Prevent Gun Injury

If you have children, it is best to not have a gun in your home. For those who keep a gun in the home, follow these safety rules:

- Always keep the gun unloaded and locked up.
- Lock and store the bullets in a separate place.

- Hide the keys to the locked boxes.
- Teach your child to leave a house or situation immediately if they see a gun, and ask the homes where your child visits if they have guns stored properly there.

RESOURCES

Books

Caring for Your School-Age Child: Ages 5 to 12
from The American Academy of Pediatrics.

Websites

www.AustinRegionalClinic.com

The ARC website contains a number of educational resources.

www.choosemyplate.gov

USDA Dietary Guidelines. This website has child-friendly materials and practical information for parents.

www.common sense media.org

Common Sense Media helps families make smart media choices, with ratings and age levels for all sorts of apps, games, and movies.

www.healthychildren.org

A parenting website developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Disponible en español.

www.healthychildren.org/English/media

Set a family media plan to help establish a healthy balance of family time and "screen-time" for your family.

www.vaccineinformation.org

A rich website with information on vaccines and the stories of those whose lives have been touched by vaccine-preventable illness.

[Make Safe Happen](#)

An app available for iPhone and Android that gives a room-by-room checklist of how to keep your child safe.

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