



## *The Nurse's Corner*

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**February is American Heart Month**, this a great time to take a few minutes to think about what we can do to improve our kids and our own cardiovascular health. Helping our children develop good healthy habits now can reap benefits for them throughout their lives. The most effective way to establish healthy habits is to lead by example and make it a priority for the whole family. Children's Health recommends these 10 things to raise a heart healthy child:

**1. Keep moving**

Exercise as a family; ride bikes, take a walk, go swimming or play games outside.

**2. Be positive**

Make heart health fun by incorporating games into your family activities or walk to a park for a healthy picnic dinner. Celebrate successes to promote a positive sense of self-esteem.

**3. Limit screen time**

Excessive screen time leads to a sedentary lifestyle and constant snacking, which increases the risk for obesity and cardiovascular disease. Limit TV, computer and phone time to two hours each day.

**4. Schedule checkups before sports season**

If your child is an athlete, have him visit the pediatrician for a physical evaluation to rule out the risk of sudden cardiac death. While this is rare in otherwise apparently healthy teens, it must be addressed to identify those who are at risk.

**5. Go to the grocery store together**

Learn more about reading nutrition labels and make it fun for your child. Staples in your kitchen should be 100 percent whole wheat or grains, low-fat dairy products, poultry, fish and nuts.

**6. Keep healthy options on hand**

When your child gets home from school, give him healthy snack options such as whole grain crackers and string cheese, hummus dip and vegetables, Greek yogurt with apple slices, nuts and dried fruit.

**7. Make dinner a family affair**

Involve your child in cooking and planning meals.

**8. Check salt intake**

Avoid processed foods and keep salt shakers off the table.

**9. Stay involved**

Be an advocate for your child and others. Insist on good food choices at school. Make sure your child's pediatrician is monitoring cardiovascular indicators like BMI, blood pressure and cholesterol. Contact public officials on matters of the heart. Make your voice heard.

**10. Be realistic**

Set realistic goals and limits. Small steps and gradual changes can make a big difference in your child's health over time, so start small and build up.

# Risk of E-cigarettes for Kids and Teens

What is an E-cigarette? E-cigarettes are electronic devices that heat a liquid and produce an aerosol, or mix of small particles in the air. Most E-cigarettes contain nicotine but they also can contain other harmful chemicals or substances too. Using e-cigarettes is also referred to as “vaping”.

Using e-cigarettes is not safe for kids and teens. The nicotine and other substances in e-cigarettes can harm the developing brain of kids and teens and possibly have negative long term effects to the lungs. The parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood and impulse control can be affected by nicotine. Scientists are still studying the current and long term effects of e-cigarettes on the body. This information is from the CDC website. Please go to the following link for more information:

[https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html) .



## School Vision Screenings

You may have received notices from your schools about Vision Screenings happening this school year. If you haven't, they'll be coming soon. Please make an effort to have your child attend school on Vision Screening Day. These simple screenings are a great opportunity to check that an essential part of learning- being able to see what is being taught- is available to all students!

If your student doesn't pass their distance vision screening, you'll be notified by your school nurse typically through a note in your child's backpack or in the mail. It is our hope that you'll take your child in to see an eye doctor as soon as possible. If you need assistance to cover the cost of an exam or glasses, there are supportive programs available. Ask your school nurse for details when you receive the referral notice.

We've seen such great results in the schools when kids receive the eye care and support that they need. The sooner an eye condition is addressed, the better the long-term results for your child! Utah law states that student eye exams occur at in public schools in Preschool, Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

We know that you know your child best! We know you want the best for your child. **A child's ability to see greatly impacts her or his ability to learn.** If you notice any of the following symptoms at home, it may indicate your child needs to be seen by an eye doctor: tilts head, squints, closes or covers one eye when reading, blurred or double vision, sensitivity to light, skips over or leaves out small words when reading, rereads or skips lines unknowingly, holds book too close or leans too close to a computer screen, thrusts head forward or backward while looking at the board, rubs eyes or blinks during or after reading.

February/March 2022

# March is Nutrition Month

## Try a rainbow of **Fruits** and **Vegetables** for better health:

Choosing fruits and vegetables with a variety of colors like **red**, **orange**, **yellow**, **green**, **blue**, and **purple** will give you a variety of healthy nutrients. Below are some options to add variety and color to your family's plate.

**Put Variety in your Veggies:** Go **dark green** and **orange** such as **spinach**, **broccoli**, **lettuce**, **carrots**, **sweet potatoes**, and **squash**.

**Fruit:** Fruits are great for mealtimes and snacks. Fruits can be fresh, frozen, canned or dried.

**Red:** strawberries, apples, cherries, grapes; **Orange/Yellow:** oranges, peaches, pineapples, bananas **Green:** apples, grapes, kiwi **Blue/Purple:** blueberries, plums, blackberries, purple grapes.

## Besides choosing fruits and vegetables, remember these healthy tips:

**Grains:** Make half your grains whole. Choose grains like whole wheat bread, brown rice, oatmeal, low fat popcorn.

**Protein:** Go Lean: Eat lean meat, chicken, turkey and fish. Try more dried beans and peas.

**Calcium** is important for strong bones: Serve low fat and fat free milk.

**Oils:** Get it from fish, nuts, and olive oil.

**Sugar:** Choose foods that don't have sugar as one of first ingredients.

**Fats:** Know your fats: Try to limit solid fats as they are higher in saturated and/or trans fats.

