

# health sense



CONTRA COSTA  
HEALTH PLAN

A Division of Contra Costa Health Services

Fall 2006

## questions & answers

**Q. My baby has a cold and won't nurse. What should I do?**

**A.** Is your baby 6 months old or younger? If so, you'll need a rubber suction bulb. (You can get one at a drugstore.)

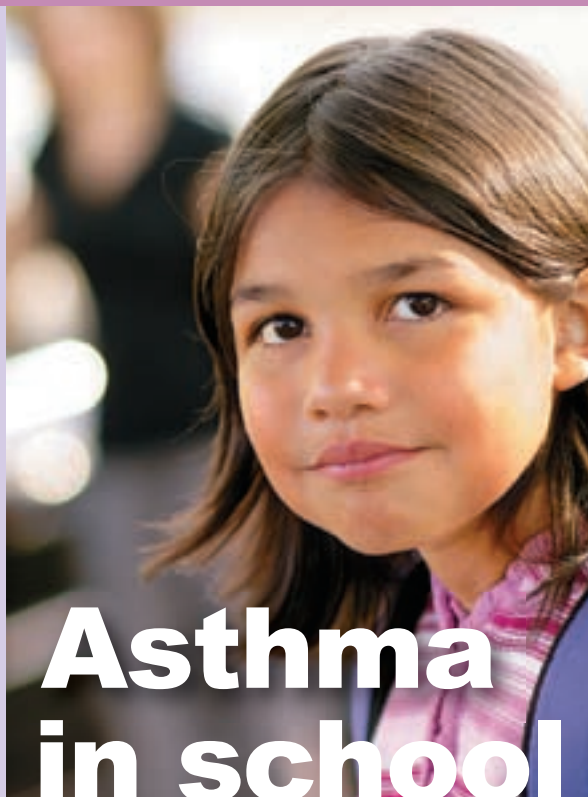
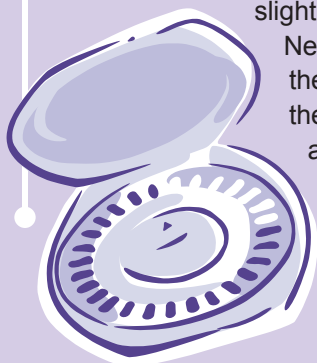
First, squeeze the bulb. Next, gently stick the rubber tip into one of your baby's nostrils. Now slowly let go of the bulb. This slight bit of suction will draw mucus out of your baby's nose, helping your baby breathe comfortably and nurse too. (Be sure to repeat the process on the other nostril.)

Older babies may fight the bulb. Ask your doctor if a vaporizer might help your child breathe easier.

**Q. Will taking birth control pills make me gain weight?**

**A.** Not really. If women do gain weight, it's only a very slight amount.

Neither the pill nor the patch affects weight much.



## Asthma in school

Asthma attacks can happen anywhere—even in school.

But there are steps you can take if your school-age child has asthma.

To keep your child safe:

● Meet with your child's teachers, coaches and school

nurse. Tell them about your child's asthma. Describe the warning signs of an attack in your child.

● Give the school a written plan from a doctor explaining how your child's asthma should be treated.

● Talk to your child. Tell your child to ask a teacher for help if asthma symptoms get worse.

● Be sure your child has his or her asthma medicine at school.

● Watch for signs of trouble. Tell a doctor if your child has a hard time learning, staying alert or having enough energy. These symptoms

may be caused by the medicine your child takes. Your child's asthma may need to be better controlled.

For more information, call Contra Costa's Asthma Program at **877-313-6905**.

Source: American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology

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## Speak up!

### Talking with your child's doctor

Your child's doctor is the person you will turn to for advice on sore throats, bumps and bruises, and maybe even broken bones.

But to get good advice, you need to do your part. Be sure to:

**Make a list.** Before visits, write down any questions you have about your child's health. That way you won't forget something important.

**Just ask.** If you have any questions, be sure to ask the doctor. Don't hold back because you think you should know the answers. Your questions show how much you care about your child's health.

**Make the most of your phone.** Call the doctor any time your child seems very sick. Call during office hours with questions about something that isn't too serious, such as a cold or behavior problems.

And always trust your feelings. Whenever you believe there is a problem, talk to your child's doctor.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics; American Medical Association



For more information, call the National Institutes of Health at 800-370-2943.

### When should your child get vaccines?

Vaccines protect children from diseases such as measles and polio. You can help protect your children by making sure they get all their vaccines on time.

This chart shows which vaccines children should get and at what age they should get them.

If your child doesn't get a vaccine at the set time, most can be given later. But talk to your child's doctor first. The chart also shows the best time to get catch-up vaccinations.

### Vaccines children need

- HepB** = hepatitis B
- Rota** = rotavirus
- HPV** = human papillomavirus (girls only)
- DTaP** = diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis
- Tdap** = tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis booster
- Hib** = *Haemophilus influenzae* type b
- IPV** = inactivated polio
- MMR** = measles, mumps, rubella
- Var** = varicella (chickenpox)
- PCV/PPV** = pneumococcal
- HepA** = hepatitis A
- Flu** = influenza
- MCV4/MPSV4** = meningococcal

Range of recommended ages

Catch-up shots

\*Recommended at age 15

Compiled with information from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Birth	1 month	2 months	4 months	6 months	12 months	15 months	18 months	24 months	4-6 years	11-12 years	13-18 years
HepB	HepB				HepB				HepB series		
		Rota	Rota	Rota						HPV (girls)	HPV (girls)
		DTaP	DTaP	DTaP		DTaP			DTaP	Tdap	Tdap
		Hib	Hib	Hib		Hib					
		IPV	IPV		IPV				IPV		MCV4*
					MMR				MMR		MMR
						Var			Var		Var
						Flu (yearly)			Flu (yearly)		Flu (yearly)
		PCV	PCV	PCV	PCV			PCV		PPV	
					HepA		HepA	HepA series			
								MPSV4			MCV4

Vaccines below this line are for certain children. Ask your doctor.



## Before you call the Advice Nurse

A call to an Advice Nurse can often save you a doctor visit. It can also help you decide if you need an urgent appointment or a routine appointment—or if you need to be seen in the emergency room.

Before you call the Advice Nurse, there are several questions you should ask yourself. The Advice Nurse will need to know these things, and it's a good idea to be prepared with answers.

1. When did the problem start?
2. What are the symptoms?
3. If you have pain, is it a dull ache or a stabbing pain?
4. Where is the location of the pain? Does it spread beyond that area?
5. Is the pain constant or off and on?
6. Have you had this problem before?
7. What did you do for it then?
8. Did it help?
9. Does anyone else at home

have these symptoms?

10. What have you done to help your current symptoms?
11. Has it helped your symptoms?
12. Have you started or stopped any medication recently?
13. Do you have a fever?
14. Did you take your temperature orally, rectally or under your arm?
15. How high is the temperature?
16. How long have you had the temperature?
17. Have you taken any medication for the temperature?
18. Did it help?

Although there are many things the Advice Nurse can help you with, there are a few things he or she cannot help you with. The Advice Nurse cannot help you with prescription refills, routine appointments, specialty appointments or pregnancy test results.

You can reach the Advice Nurse at **877-661-6230, option 1** (after choosing English or Spanish).

## Keep track of your medications

This form will help you keep a record of your medications. Cut it out, fill it out and keep it in your wallet.

### My personal medicine record

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### Allergies and reactions

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Keep a current list of every medicine you are taking

- Prescriptions.
- Over-the-counter medicines.
- Dietary supplements, such as vitamins and herbs.

Make sure ALL of your doctors know what you are taking. Give them a copy of your list. If possible, bring your medicines with you so that your doctors can see them.

### My Primary Care Provider

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Health center \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### My pharmacy

Name \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

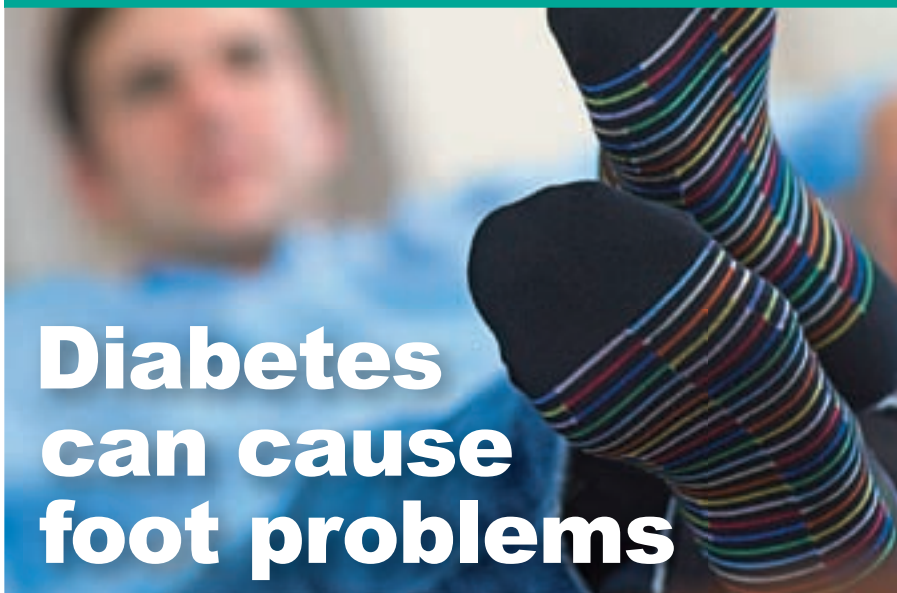
### Emergency contact

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

For your purse or wallet. Keep with you at all times.

# diabetes



## Diabetes can cause foot problems

If you have diabetes, take care of your feet.

Diabetes causes blood sugar to be too high. This can damage nerves, causing you to lose feeling in your feet.

When you lose feeling in your feet, you may not know you have a blister or sore, which can get infected. In serious cases, surgery may be needed to remove infected toes or feet. But there are things you can do to take care of your feet. You can:

- Keep your blood sugar level under control.
- Check your feet every day for sores, cuts or other problems.
- Wash your feet every day and

dry carefully between your toes.

- Keep your toenails trimmed.
- Always wear shoes and socks.
- Take part in activities that are easy on your feet, such as walking and swimming.
- Avoid running and jumping, which can be hard on your feet.
- Rub lotion over the tops and bottoms of your feet, but not between your toes.
- Don't let your feet get too hot or too cold.

It's also a good idea to have your doctor check your feet regularly.

If you lose feeling in your feet or have other foot problems, see your doctor right away.

Source: National Institutes of Health

## Keep cholesterol under control

If you have diabetes, you may have a problem with cholesterol, a type of fat in your blood.

Diabetes raises your risk of heart attack and stroke. If your cholesterol is high, you have a bigger risk.

There are two types of cholesterol—good and bad. Not enough of the good kind or too

much of the bad kind can block your blood vessels.

If you have diabetes, you should have your cholesterol checked at least once a year.

To keep your cholesterol at a healthy level:

- Eat a healthy diet.
- Keep active every day.
- Don't smoke.

Your doctor also may have you take medicine to help.

Source: American Diabetes Association

Name of medicine  
Example: Lasix

How much do I take?  
1 tablet 40 mg

When do I take it?  
Morning

What do I use it for?  
Water pill

Who prescribed it?  
Dr. Jones



## Fight colds and flu: Beat the germs!

Cough. Sniffle. Achoo! It's no fun when you have a cold or the flu. Cold and flu germs are what make you sick. These germs spread when you:

- Sneeze.
- Cough.
- Touch something covered with germs.

But there's a lot you can do to fight germs and keep from getting sick. Here are some fun games that can tell you how.

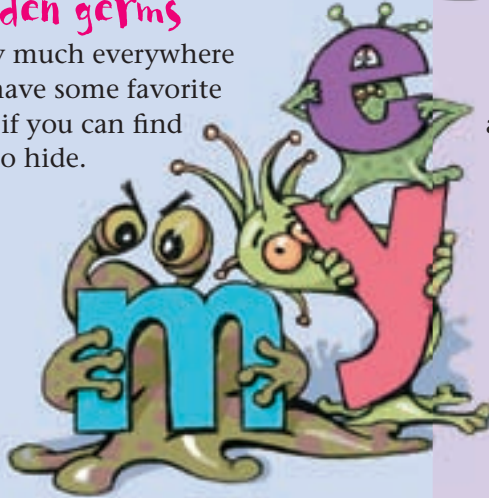


### Find the hidden germs

Germs are pretty much everywhere you go. But they have some favorite hiding places. See if you can find where germs like to hide.

Find these words:

- Bathroom
- Kitchen
- Remote control
- Cafeteria
- Gym
- Locker room
- Telephone
- Doorknob



k c b e h e c t r o r m  
 i a t e l e p h o n e m  
 t e r i e c e e i k m o  
 c c r r h h b e y o r  
 h t d d d t c d p t t o  
 e y o e e l a o h h e n  
 n e e o o o f o k e c n  
 h n l o c k e r r o o m  
 t h l o r l t k o g n o  
 n k i t c h e n o y t e  
 e d b a t h r o o m r e  
 n c c c i i i b h h o o  
 o a h e t o a e e e l e

### Handwashing how-to

Washing your hands is the best way to get rid of germs. It's especially important to wash your hands after you sneeze or cough. Here's how to wash the right way:

- 1. Dive** in! Put your hands under warm running water and use soap.



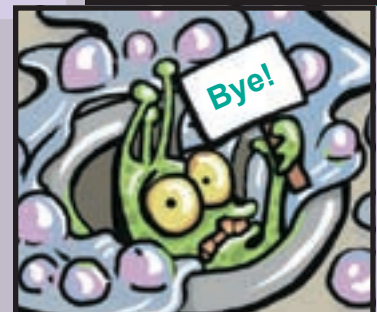
- 2. Scrub** up! Rub your hands together and make lots of bubbles to scrub away dirt and germs.



- 3. Sing** a little song! Don't just do a quick rinse. Wash long enough to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.



- 4. Rinse** off! Rinse your hands well to get all the soap and germs down the drain.



- 5. Dry** those hands! Don't just wipe those wet hands on your clothes. Dry your hands well with a clean towel or paper towels.





you control your weight. Most are low in calories. Many are high in fiber. They'll fill you up, not out.

### How you can do it

Here are some easy ways you can fit more fruits and vegetables into your meals.

### Breakfast

- Add fruit to your cereal.
- Drink a glass of 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice.
- Blend low-fat yogurt, orange juice and a banana into a smoothie.

### Lunch

- Add chopped pears or apples to a green salad.
- Toss kidney beans, chickpeas and green beans with a low-fat dressing.
- Add 1 or 2 cups of

frozen vegetables to canned soup before heating.

### Dinner

- Have a veggie pizza.
- Add fresh or frozen veggies to your spaghetti sauce.

*Eating healthy foods helps you get the vitamins you need.*

- Have fresh fruit for dessert. You can find many more ideas at [www.5aday.gov](http://www.5aday.gov). Or ask your doctor for help.

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## Breakfast: Fuel for healthy kids

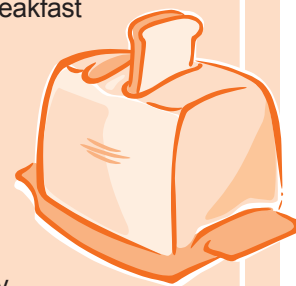
Breakfast really might be the most important meal of your child's day.

Eating breakfast gives kids an early start on getting the vitamins and minerals they need every day.

Studies show that children who eat breakfast do better in school than kids who skip that first meal.

A good breakfast helps kids:

- Boost their memory.
- Feel less tired.
- Think more clearly.



It can even help them control their weight. A child who eats well in the morning may be less likely to overeat at lunch.

Try pairing these quick breakfasts with a glass of 100 percent fruit juice or low-fat milk:

- Melted cheese on whole-grain toast.
- Peanut butter rolled in a tortilla.
- A low-fat waffle with sliced fruit.
- A cold slice of pizza and an orange.
- Cereal topped with bananas or strawberries.

Source: Children's Nutrition Research Center

## Tasty ways to add fruits and veggies

Health experts say we should eat five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables every day.

That may sound like a lot, but there are some fairly easy—and tasty—ways you can do it.

### Why it's a good goal

Fruits and vegetables are health foods wrapped in nature's colorful containers. You don't need a bottle opener. Just bite an apple or peel a banana to find the vitamins and minerals your body needs to stay healthy.

Fruits and veggies can also help