



HEALTHLINK

WINTER 2009



Bedtime Safety Tips for Your Baby

When the weather gets cold, it may be tempting to wrap up your baby in blankets. But sleeping with blankets or quilts puts babies at a higher risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Do not put loose blankets or fluffy bedding in a crib. If you do use a blanket, tuck it in under the crib's mattress. Keep it no higher than your baby's chest. And use a firm mattress with a fitted sheet.

Here are other ways to help prevent SIDS:

- Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep.
- Think about giving your baby a clean and dry pacifier before bedtime.
- Remove any toys or pillows from the crib.

A Sure Cure for Cabin Fever

Most moms and dads know that winter can lead to cabin fever. Kids may start to feel restless and cranky from being indoors too long. What's the cure? A healthy dose of active playtime.

Encourage your kids to move around more. You may need to cut down on TV and computer use. Researchers find that healthy, fit children spend less than 60 minutes a day in front of a TV or computer screen. Kids need 60 to 90 minutes of active play each day. It helps them stay in shape.

Keep your family healthy and happy this season. Try these fun ideas:

- Bundle up! Go outside and build a snowman or snow fort.
- Celebrate a winter birthday with a family trip to ice-skate, sled, or snowboard. Remember helmets and wrist guards for snowboarders.
- When you watch TV, do jumping jacks with your kids during the commercials.
- With an older child, train indoors to walk or run a race for your favorite charity. ■



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Tips for Keeping a New Year's Resolution

Sticking to a healthy resolution can be hard. Below are three popular goals and tips to help you meet them.

“I want to lose weight.”

- Set small goals you can achieve. Don't say, “I will lose 20 pounds.” Instead, decide to be more active every other day. Write down your progress.
- Eat a small amount of your favorite foods sometimes. This will help prevent cravings.
- Find simple ways to get exercise. Use the stairs and not the elevator. Park your car a block or two away from the store.

“I want to save money.”

- Write down everything you buy for one month. You may notice you spend cash on things that are not necessary. Maybe it is just \$5 or \$10 here and there. But if it is not necessary, try to stop.
- Don't use credit cards if you cannot pay them off in a month or two.
- If you have credit card debt, pay



more than the minimum amount every month. Pay the most to the cards with the highest interest rates.

“I want to quit smoking.”

- Add up all the money you spend on cigarettes. Ask yourself what you'd rather do with that money over the next 10 years.
- Remember that there is no safe tobacco product, including snuff or chewing tobacco.
- Think about seeing a counselor. The Nebraska Quitline also can help you. Call 800-QUIT-NOW (800-784-8669) or visit www.smokefree.gov. ■

Craft a plan for losing weight at www.bluehealthadvantagene.com. Choose “Health Information” on the left side of the page. Then Select “Getting Fit” from the list of FREE brochures. Print it out today, and start the path to a healthier you!

Know Your Numbers

Do you know if you are at risk for diabetes, heart disease, or other diseases? You can find out! There are special “numbers” that can tell you about your health. When you know your numbers, you can take action to help prevent health problems. Here are numbers that are important for you:

- Blood pressure
- Cholesterol levels
- Blood sugar
- Body mass index (a measure of your weight and height)
- Waist size

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska offers a FREE wallet card to help you track your numbers. You can find it, and learn more, at www.bluehealthadvantagene.com. Click on “Individual Programs.” Print the card, and ask your doctor to record your numbers at every visit.

Need Help?

If you need help reading this information, please contact Primary Care+ Member Services at **1-800-424-7097** (Lincoln) or **402-392-4180** (Omaha).

Si necesita ayuda para leer esta información, póngase en contacto con el Servicio para Afiliados de Primary Care+ llamando al **1-800-424-7097** (Lincoln) o al **402-392-4180** (Omaha)

Nếu quý vị cần được giúp đỡ để đọc thông tin này, xin vui lòng liên lạc Ban Phục Vụ Thành Viên Chương Trình Primary Care+ ở số **1-800-424-7097** (Lincoln) hoặc **402-392-4180** (Omaha).

Free Yourself from a Runny Nose

Having a cold with a runny nose can make for a tough day. It would be great to get rid of it. But what works? One thing that does not work is antibiotics.

Colds are caused by a virus. Antibiotics do not treat viruses. The good news is you can soothe a runny nose without a prescription.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Colds usually go away in about a week. These tips can help you feel better until then:

- Get plenty of rest.
- Sip a bowl of chicken soup.
- Take a hot shower. Breathe in the steam.
- Drink a lot of water.

Did you know Medicaid helps pay for many OTC medications? And most people, like children and pregnant women, have no copayment—it's free! Just ask your doctor for a prescription.

TAKE A TRIP TO THE STORE

Over-the-counter (OTC) medications may help, too. You can buy OTC medications at a drugstore. They are usually safe for adults, but do not give an OTC cough or cold product to children younger than age 6 without asking your doctor first.

- **For a runny nose:** Antihistamines can help relieve itching, sneezing, and a runny nose. Some antihistamines can make you sleepy. Follow the instructions carefully.
- **For a stuffy nose:** Decongestants can ease stuffiness and pressure. Only use a nasal spray decongestant for three to five days. If taken for too long, it can make symptoms worse. ■

Classic Macaroni and Cheese

Warm up your winter with this heart-healthy version of a family favorite.

2 cups macaroni

Nonstick cooking spray

½ cup onions, chopped

½ cup evaporated skim milk

1 egg, beaten

¼ tsp. black pepper

1½ cups low-fat sharp cheddar cheese, finely shredded

1. Cook macaroni according to directions, but do not add salt to the cooking water. Drain and set aside.
2. Spray casserole dish with nonstick cooking spray.
3. Preheat oven to 350° F.
4. Lightly spray saucepan with nonstick cooking spray. Add onions to saucepan and sauté for about three minutes.
5. In another bowl, combine macaroni, onions, and the rest of the ingredients. Mix well.
6. Transfer mixture into casserole dish.
7. Bake for 25 minutes or until bubbly. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

Yield: Eight servings.

Serving size: ½ cup.

Each serving provides: Calories 200, Total fat 4 g, Saturated fat 2 g, Sodium 120 mg, Protein 11 g.

fast facts

Is your kid a picky eater? Don't give up hope! It may take 10 or more tries before a child likes a new food. Keep working at it.



HEALTHLINK

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This information is intended to educate readers about subjects pertinent to their health, not as a substitute for consultation with a personal physician.

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Important Phone Numbers

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800-821-4790 (Lincoln)

For a complete physician list,
contact **Primary Care+ Member
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For practice limitations, call the
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Omaha
888-255-2605

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402-471-7715

CULTURAL CORNER

Cyberbullying:



Keep Kids Safe Online

Bullies today are not just on the playground. Now they can cause harm without being seen.

Cyberbullying often happens on the Internet. It also can occur through a cell phone or another electronic item. A cyberbully may send or post messages to hurt another person. For example, a teen might pretend to be someone else online. Then he or she can trick a classmate into giving personal information. Or a person might send a threatening instant message or e-mail.

But you can do a lot to keep children safe. You also can make sure they are not bullying other kids. Take these steps:

- Put the computer in a family space, such as the living room or kitchen. Keep an eye on kids

while they are online.

- Talk with your child about what he or she does on the Internet.
- Explain that cyberbullying is very harmful. Set rules for online behavior. Make it clear what happens if the rules are broken.
- Tell your child that you may look at his or her online messages if you have concerns.
- Consider special software for your computer. There are programs that allow parents to control what kids can see and do on the Internet.

There are a lot of safe, fun activities on the Internet, too! For kid-friendly games and more, check out www.kids.gov.