



## GO TO AN URGENT CARE CLINIC FOR NON-EMERGENCIES

Even healthy children get hurt and sick sometimes. As a parent, it is often hard to determine if the situation needs the attention of a doctor or if you can take care of it at home.

When you know the problem is minor, it's best to go to an urgent care center, see your child's doctor or handle it at home. The more people who go to the ER with non-emergencies, the longer everyone has to wait for care.

When you can't determine whether it's an emergency or not, call your child's doctor. Even if the office is closed, someone will call you back.

Urgent care centers usually allow you to walk in without an appointment, just as you would to an emergency room. They are equipped and staffed to treat minor, non life-threatening issues.

Most urgent care clinics have evening and weekend office hours. Some are open 24 hours a day every day. Situations where you might take your child to an urgent care center include:

- Minor injuries
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Severe ear pain
- Sore throat
- Infected bug bites
- Mild allergic reactions

Talk with your child's doctor before he or she gets sick. Ask how to handle emergencies and what the doctor's policy is on addressing medical needs after office hours. Having this information ahead of time will mean one less thing to worry about when your child is sick.

Cut this out and put it on your refrigerator as a reminder!

## FREE SCHOOL SUPPLIES!

Mark your calendar to attend  
Texas Children's Health Plan's Back to School Fair

Bring the whole family for free immunizations, screenings and school supplies while they last. You do not have to attend Aldine High School or a school in Aldine School District to get free school supplies, screenings or immunizations.

**Saturday, July 26, 2008**  
Aldine High School  
11101 Airline Drive, Houston 77037  
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



# PREPARE YOUR FAMILY FOR A NATURAL DISASTER

It is important to teach children about natural disasters without overly alarming them. Tell children that a natural disaster is something that could hurt people or cause damage. Explain that nature sometimes provides “too much of a good thing”—fire, rain, and wind.

Teach your children:

- How to call for help.
- When to call each emergency number.
- To call the family contact if separated.
- To keep personal identification information in their possession at all times.

Create a family disaster plan:

- Hold a family meeting; keep it simple and work as a team.
- Talk about the dangers of disasters with your family.
- Have a plan in case you are separated.
- Plan several escape and evacuation routes.

- Become familiar with your child’s childcare or school disaster plans as you could be separated from your child during a disaster.
- Plan how to take care of your pets if you need to evacuate.

If you are told to evacuate, take these steps:

- Leave right away if told to do so.
- Wear protective clothing and shoes.
- Shut off water, gas and electricity if told to do so.
- Leave a note telling when you left and where you are going.
- Call your family contact to tell him or her where you are going.
- Take your family emergency supplies.
- Lock your home.
- Use routes suggested by officials.

For more information on preparing your family for a natural disaster, visit the Centers for Disease Control’s Emergency Preparedness Web site at [www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters).

# PREVENT ACCIDENTAL DROWNING WITH THESE TIPS

Among all unintentional injuries, drowning is a leading cause of death for children ages 1-14 years old. Children most often drown in swimming pools, lakes and bathtubs but can drown in as little as just 1 inch of water.

Drowning is usually quick, quiet and happens in less than 5 minutes. In 2 minutes—the time it takes to answer the phone—a child can become unconscious. Permanent brain damage can occur after just 4-6 minutes under water.

The most important thing you can do to prevent a drowning is to watch your child closely when they are in or near any kind of water. Just being nearby is not enough. You should have all of your attention focused on the child when they are near water.

## Follow these tips to help prevent drowning:

- Never leave your child alone near any amount of water. Even children who know how to swim should be closely watched.
- Children should always wear a life jacket when around pools or lakes.
- Swimming pools should always have a fence around them with a self-latching gate.
- While at the pool or lake, adults should take turns being “water watchers.” A “water watcher” only watches children around the water and does not get distracted by other activities like talking on the phone, eating, reading or sunbathing.
- Learn CPR.

# PROTECT YOURSELF FROM MOSQUITO BITES THIS SUMMER

Mosquito bites are a summertime hazard for Houstonians. Mosquitoes carry disease. The bites can also become infected. Skin infections can be serious if left untreated.

Prevent mosquito bites by:

- Dressing in long-sleeves and long pants in the morning and evening when mosquitoes are most active.
- Using insect repellent. Doctors advise using insect repellents containing DEET in a 30 percent solution or less.
- Getting rid of places around the home where water collects, like old tires and empty flowerpots. These are places where mosquitoes can breed.

If you get bitten by a mosquito:

- Wash the bite and surrounding area with soap and water.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Do not scratch the bites.
- Use anti-itch creams to help soothe the itching.
- Call your doctor if you think the bite is infected.

Some symptoms of skin infection include tenderness, pain and swelling at the site of the infection. If the infection spreads, you may have fever and chills along with swollen lymph nodes. If you notice any of these symptoms, call your doctor or nurse as soon as possible for treatment.

For more information on these and other health and safety topics, visit us at [www.TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org](http://www.TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org) or call 1-800-990-8247.