

KIDS FIRST



A publication of **Texas Children's Health Plan CHIP and STAR** Members ages 7-11 and their parents.

In this ISSUE

- 02** Spring into healthy living
- 03** Avoid mosquito bites
- 04** Bike Safety

MK-0215-143



MOODY GARDENS BEACH PARTY

Bring your family and join us on the white sand at Palm Beach. There will be a lazy river, 18-foot tower slides, a wave pool, a splash pad for younger kids, and much more.

saturday. may 2
 Moody Gardens
 One Hope Blvd., Galveston, TX
 No cost for parking!

Sign up begins **March 30** at TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org/moodygardens.

NONPROFIT ORG.
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 PERMIT NO. 1167
 HOUSTON, TX

Spring into healthy living

It's springtime! The flowers and trees are in bloom. And you can almost smell the pollen in the air. For many people, that also means it's allergy time. Here are some tips on how to reduce exposure and enjoy the spring season:

TIPS FOR ALLERGIES:

- **Keep windows closed when possible.**
- **Change your air filters regularly.** How often depends on the type of filter you use. Check your filter's product information to see what its manufacturer suggests.
- **Try to schedule outdoor activities late in the day.** Pollen levels are highest in the morning and early afternoon.
- **Do not smoke in the house.**
- **Eliminate the use of strong chemicals** such as household cleaners. These cleaning products are loaded with unsafe chemicals. You can make your own cleaner with common, natural and non-toxic ingredients. These are safer and also cheaper to use, and they clean just as well (See the chart for some recipes for natural home cleaners).



LEARN SOCCER FROM THE PROS

AT ONE OF OUR HOUSTON DYNAMO SOCCER CLINICS.

Perform drills and learn from Dynamo coaches at one of our Houston Dynamo Soccer Clinics. And get tickets to a home game!

WHERE

Houston Sports Park

TIME

6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

DATES

July	Aug.	Aug.	Aug.
24	7	21	28

Sign up at TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org/DynamoClinics starting June 22nd!

Is it allergies or a cold?

It's that time of year again. And that means you may have a runny nose, cough, or you are sneezing a lot. And maybe you aren't sure if it is a cold or allergies. It can be hard to tell the two apart because both can cause some of the same symptoms. We have a few tips to help you know when it's seasonal allergies.

Allergies

Allergies do not spread from person to person, and they are rare in children under 2 years of age. Allergies happen when your child's body overreacts to things in the environment. Your child may have a runny nose, itchy eyes, sneezing, nasal congestion, and a cough.

What can cause allergies?

- Pet hair
- Dust
- Mold
- Pollen

How can you get relief from allergy symptoms?

- Stay away from things that trigger your child's allergy symptoms.
- Use medicines called antihistamines (Claritin and Zyrtec) for a runny nose and itchy eyes. You can get these medicines without a doctor's prescription.
- For more relief, see your doctor to get a prescription nasal spray. If used daily for several weeks, nasal sprays can help to clear up nasal allergy symptoms.

So, how can you tell the difference between allergies and a cold?

- You do not get a fever with allergies. You can have a fever with a cold.
- You can have itchy eyes with allergies, not usually with a cold.
- Allergies can last weeks or months! A cold will go away in a week.
- If your symptoms happen at the same time of year, it may be allergies. Allergies are most common in the spring and summer when pollen counts are high. You may even notice that your child's allergy symptoms come back at the same time every year.

Play safe Outside. *Avoid mosquito bites!*

It's spring time, and summer is almost here. That means it's time to play outside! This also means you are more likely to get bitten by a mosquito. Keep reading for some tips on what to do you if you get bit and how you can avoid it.



What's a mosquito?

A mosquito is an insect that is found all over the world. There are thousands of different kinds of mosquitoes in many different sizes and colors.

The female mosquito needs blood from animals to lay eggs and reproduce. She has a special part of her mouth that she uses to suck blood, and her saliva (spit) thins the blood so she can drink it. In fact, it's the mosquito's saliva that makes the bites itch!

What does a bite look and feel like?	Round, pink, or red bump that itches a lot.
What should I do?	Wash the bite with soap and water. Put on some calamine lotion to help stop the itching. An ice pack might also help.
Should I see a doctor?	It's unusual for you to have an allergic reaction to a mosquito bite. But if you have one and feel dizzy or sick, tell an adult right away. A doctor can treat the allergic reaction.

How do I avoid getting bitten?

The best way to avoid mosquito bites is to wear an insect repellent. Ask a parent to help you apply them.

Repellents that include 1 of these ingredients are best:

- 10% to 30% DEET.
- Lemon eucalyptus.
- Picaridin.

Since mosquitoes lay their eggs in water, it's a good idea to empty out buckets, flower pots, toys, and other things in your yard that can collect water during a rainstorm. And when possible, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants to keep mosquitoes away from your skin.

The itchy truth *about rashes*

QUESTION: What is red and itchy, but can also be bumpy, lumpy, or scaly?

ANSWER: If you said a rash, you're right!

What is a rash?

A rash can be called dermatitis, which is swelling or irritation of the skin. It can be red, dry, scaly, and itchy. Rashes can also be lumps, bumps, blisters, and even pimples. Most people have had a rash at some point, so it's normal.

Some rashes, however, can cause fever and be signs of serious illness or allergic reaction. Here are some common types of rashes and what you should look for:

Hives	Reddish or pale swellings on the body. Caused by an allergic reaction to food, medicine, bug bite, or virus. See your doctor right away.
Eczema	Dry, chapped, or bumpy areas around the skin. In severe cases—red, scaly, and swollen skin all over the body.
Irritant contact dermatitis	Red, swollen, and itchy rash from contact with something irritating, such as chemical, soap, or detergent. Can also be a sunburn.
Allergic contact dermatitis	Rash from an allergen. Includes poison ivy, oak, and sumac.

What do I do if my child gets a rash?

See your doctor. He or she can tell you what kind of rash it is, how to treat it, and ways to prevent it.

Source: KidsHealth.org

Bike safety:

Why is it important?

Bike riding is a lot of fun, but accidents happen. The safest way to use your bike is for transportation, not play. **Every year, about 300,000 kids go to the emergency room because of bike injuries**, and at least 10,000 kids have injuries that require a few days in the hospital. Some of these injuries are so serious that children die, usually from head injuries (wear your helmet!).

Here are some safety tips to help you stay safe while riding your bike this summer.

PROPER MAINTENANCE

- Make sure your seat, handlebars, and wheels fit tightly.
- Check and oil your chain regularly.
- Check your brakes to be sure they work well and aren't sticking.
- Check your tires to make sure they have enough air and the right amount of pressure.

WHAT TO WEAR

- Always wear a helmet when you ride. Make sure it fits right and the straps are always fastened.
- Wear bright colors and put reflectors on your bike.
- Always wear sneakers when you ride. NO sandals, flip-flops, or cleats, and never barefoot!

WHERE TO RIDE

- Check with your mom or dad about where you're allowed to ride.
- Know how far you need to go and whether to ride on the sidewalk or in the street. Kids younger than 10 years should avoid the street.
- Keep an eye out for cars and trucks, even if you are on the sidewalk. If you are crossing a busy road, walk your bike across the street.

**Now you're ready
to ride
responsibly!**

ROAD RULES

- Always ride with your hands on the handlebars.
- Always stop and check for traffic in both directions when leaving your driveway, an alley, or a curb.
- Follow traffic signals and use the crosswalk at intersections.
- Ride on the right side of the street. Never ride against traffic.
- Use bike lanes or designated bike routes wherever you can.
- Stop at all stop signs and obey traffic lights just as cars do.

HAND SIGNALS



You should also learn some hand signals. These are like turn signals and brake lights for bikers. It helps cars and trucks know what you will do next, so they don't run into you.

DON'T FORGET:

Quest Diagnostics is our new lab provider

We want to remind you about some exciting news!
Quest Diagnostics is our exclusive reference lab provider **effective January 1, 2015**. If you are currently using a Quest Patient Service Center for your lab services, nothing will change for you. You can also continue to have blood drawn in your doctor's office.

If you are going to any other lab patient center for lab services, you will need to find a Quest Diagnostics Patient Service Center near you. Contact Member Services at **1-866-959-6555 (CHIP)** or **1-866-959-2555 (STAR)** for help finding a Quest Diagnostics Patient Service Center.

