

ManageYour Health



SUMMER 2018

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A photograph of a young girl with curly hair, wearing a pink backpack and a light pink shirt, smiling. She is standing in front of a yellow school bus.

**We're giving away
school supplies**

Save the date
Saturday, July 28
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Alameda Mall, 12200 Gulf Fwy.

Backpacks4School.org

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**Texas Children's
Health Plan**
Texas Children's Health Plan
P.O. Box 301011
Houston, TX 77230-1011

Exercise makes your heart happy

You may know your heart is a muscle. It works hard, pumping blood every day of your life. Exercising every day for at least 60 minutes can help decrease your risk of developing certain diseases, including diabetes and high blood pressure.

Think it's too hot to get a work-out outside? Try this indoor routine to keep yourself fit, cool, and comfortable.



Chair Squats

- Stand tall and place chair behind you.
- Arms straight in front.
- Slowly lower your bottom toward the chair without sitting down.
- Slowly rise to standing.

High Knees

- Stand straight with feet shoulder width apart.
- Jump from one foot to the other at the same time lifting your knees as high as possible.

Sit Backs

- Sit on the floor with your legs bent.
- Place your arms straight out front.
- Keep your arms straight and your stomach tight.
- Slowly lean back as far as comfortable.
- Slowly return to sitting position.

Jenny Rowlands, MPH, CHES

Be active! Stay healthy! Keep fit!

Learn how to live a healthier life.

Members from 10 to 18 years old can sign up for our **Keep Fit Club** and learn fun, easy ways to stay active and make smart food choices. And it's no cost to you!

Keep Fit offers:

- Healthy cooking and easy recipes.
- Fun exercises you can do at home.
- Special activities.

Sign up: [TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org/KeepFit](https://www.texaschildrenshealthplan.org/KeepFit) or call 832-828-1430.



Eat summer fruits to stay healthy

Watermelon

Look for: A heavy, symmetrical watermelon with a dried stem and yellowish underside.

To store: Whole watermelons can be stored at room temperature.

Once it's cut, refrigerate in an airtight container and eat within 5 days.

Ways to enjoy: In a smoothie, as a popsicle, add to a salad, or eat straight from the rind.

Blackberries

Look for: Shiny berries that are not bruised or leaky.

To store: Refrigerate for 3-6 days, and wash just before using.

Ways to enjoy: Add to your morning cereal, oatmeal, or just fill up a bowl and snack away.

Raspberries

Look for: Dry, plump, and firm raspberries.

To store: Refrigerate and eat within 1-2 days. Do not wash berries until you are ready to eat them.

Ways to enjoy: Add to a salad, smoothie, muffin, or eat with plain, low-fat yogurt or on your salad.

Peaches

Look for: Firm, fuzzy skin that gives with a little pressure of the finger.

To store: Unripe peaches can be kept in a paper bag. Once ripe, store at room temperature and use within 1-2 days.

Ways to enjoy: Add frozen peaches to your tea or water, bake with a little cinnamon, smoothie, eat with cereal, low-fat yogurt or cottage cheese.

Blueberries

Look for: Firm, plump, dry blueberries with a dusty blue color and uniform in size.

To store: Refrigerate for 10-14 days.

Ways to enjoy: On your oatmeal, waffle, fruit kabob, smoothie, or in a salad.

Jenny M. Rowlands, MPH CHES



Fun ways to help your child eat more vegetables

Concerned about your child not eating enough vegetables? Here are some tips to refresh your summer veggie recipes:

Let your children help you.

From getting the fresh vegetables and fruits from the fridge, to washing them, and even dicing them –if they are old enough –children who are included on preparing meals are more likely to at least try what they helped prepare.

Have veggies ready to eat.

In a hurry? Slice cucumbers or bell peppers, celery sticks, and sugar snap peas for a quick, healthy snack. You can also toss them into a salad bowl. Add some leftover chicken pieces that you may have from the night before, a little low fat cheese, and voila!

Don't know what to do with veggies that will get bad soon?

Slice them and place them in a pitcher full of water. Refrigerate for at least one hour and treat your child to a cool, flavorful drink, after outdoor play!

Be creative and have fun!

Make yummy salads by combining fruits and vegetables. Balsamic dressings go perfect with this type of recipes. And you can't go wrong by adding some herbs for seasoning, and cheese for that salty flavor.

Have a refreshing summer!

Donaji Stelzig, MPH, CHES, LCCE, CHWI



Take charge of your diabetes

If you have diabetes, it is important to get your blood drawn regularly for lab tests. These tests will help your doctor monitor your health.

Diabetics should have the Hemoglobin A1c drawn at least twice a year. Your doctor may want you to have it done more often than that. You should keep track of your A1c level so you have a record of any changes that may occur. The A1c shows how in control your diabetes is. The American Diabetic Association states that the ideal goal is for this level to remain under 7. Case management staff at Texas Children's Health Plan want to help you stay in control. Lab work for diabetics are reviewed and members with lab work at 9 or above or not completed will be contacted by our staff to see how we might help you.

You should also have your cholesterol checked once a year and have your urine checked for micro albumin on a yearly basis. Ask your doctor if you have any questions.

It is also important for diabetics to have an eye exam each year. This can help the doctor find eye problems associated with diabetes so that your eyesight can be protected. Eye exams are a benefit of your insurance.

7- and 30-day mental health follow-up

Has your child been in acute psychiatric care?

If so, you may have been informed that your child must have a 7- and 30-day follow-up visit with a mental health professional.

Take your child to an in-network provider within 7 days of release. And again within 30 days of release. We urge you to see a therapist for the 7-day follow-up and a psychiatrist for the 30-day follow-up. This makes sure your child is seen post release when they may be at the most risk for relapse. If needed, your child can work through any issues in therapy on an outpatient basis. And he or she can see the psychiatrist to check his or her medications.



You can still have fun when you have asthma



Children with asthma should be able to run and play and enjoy their summer. Here are a few simple things to remember to keep asthma in control.

- Be careful about what you breathe. Smoke of all kinds hurts the lungs, including tobacco smoke and barbecue smoke.
- When you smoke, you expose your children. Keeping your home and car smoke-free helps, but this usually is not enough to protect them if someone they are close to is a smoker. To stop smoking call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or visit <http://smokefree.gov> for free help.
- Know your child's asthma medicines. There are two types of asthma medicines.

One is a quick reliever, the other is a long term controller.

Quick relief medicine lets you use it and you feel better right away, but it only lasts for a few hours. Quick relief medicines relieve asthma attacks, but they don't fix the problem. As a rule of thumb, if your child needs his quick relief medicine to relieve

asthma symptoms more than twice a week during the day, or if your child wakes up needing his or her inhaler more than twice a month at night, asthma is not in good control. If your child's asthma is not in good control, see your child's doctor.

You may not feel long-term control medicine working. This medicine tells the breathing tubes in the lungs "don't be so sensitive, act like you don't have asthma."

If your child uses long-term control medicine every day, he should feel better and have fewer symptoms within 2 to 4 weeks. When you feel better, you are tempted to stop using the medicine, but don't! The medicine can be the reason that your child is so much better. If you don't know the difference, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

- Have a plan. Ask for a written asthma action plan. This plan goes over what to do when your child is well in order to stay well, what to do when asthma problems are just starting, and what to do if asthma problems are starting to get bad.

Source: Harold J. Farber, MD, MPSH

Does your child have a Written Asthma Action Plan?

An Asthma Action Plan includes:

- A daily care plan to help keep your child well and meet goals for asthma control.
- A rescue plan to help your child deal quickly with increasing symptoms.
- A guide for asthma emergencies to help you know when to call the doctor and when you need emergency help.

Texas Children's Health Plan is offering interactive asthma education classes for qualifying pediatric members ages 6-18. The program is a series of 6 one-hour classes held at The Centers for Children and Women. Members must attend all 6 classes in order to receive a \$50 gift card upon completion. If you have a diagnosis of asthma and are interested in participating, please call 832-828-1005 for more information.



Call us at
832-828-1430 or call Member
Services at 1-866-959-2555 (STAR)
or
1-866-959-6555 (CHIP) if you need
an Asthma Action Plan.



How to thrive this summer with ADHD

For children with ADHD, ADD or a learning disability, summer can be a challenging time. The school year has been full with scheduled class periods and activities, when your child suddenly has extended free time.

Here are five tips to structure summer and help your children continue to learn and fight off boredom.

- 1. Get involved in community activities.** Find free or low cost activities in your area to attend with your kids. If your kids will be home alone or with a sitter, find activities for them to complete throughout the day. Popular local options: Discovery Green in Houston, public library, YMCA or community center.
- 2. Maintain skills learned at school.** Summer time may be a break from regular school, but not from learning! Joining your local library's summer reading club will limit their time on the computer, tablet and playing video games. It's also a great excuse to get out of the house!
- 3. Keep a daily routine.** Children do better when they know what to expect and what's expected of them. For children with ADHD or ADD, routines are very helpful. For example, your child wakes up, eats breakfast, plays outside, and helps with chores. Also, try to keep a consistent sleep schedule where your child gets 8-10 hours of sleep each night.
- 4. Continue taking medications.** Speak with your healthcare provider about continuing medication through the summer instead of going off of medications for three months. Remember your children will still be learning, even though they're on summer break.
- 5. Spend time together as a family.** Be intentional about spending time with your children. Choose a day each week where you can spend time together as a family while enjoying a special activity. This can help them develop healthy relationships with you and your family while making fun memories.

Jenny Rowlands, MPH, CHES

Treat your child's ADHD

Texas Children's Health Plan and the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) are checking key parts of care for children who are given ADHD medication. You may get follow-up calls to help remind you about the visit.

- Your child should go to a follow-up visit by the prescribing doctor during the first 30 days from the first date the medicine was given.
- Your child should also go to 2 follow-up visits within the next 9 months from a prescribing doctor.

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