

FAMILY HEALTH PROGRAM™

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In proud partnership with



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's
"Learn the Signs. Act Early." Campaign



Looking After **You and Your Young Child**

For mothers of children ages 18 months to 5 years



Welcome . . .

. . . to the Family Health Program™ brought to you in proud partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." Campaign, National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNP), Visiting Nurse Associations of America (VNA), and the makers of LYSOL® brand products.

Looking After You and Your Young Child places special focus on you and on your child from ages 18 months to five years. This informative guide explores need-to-know areas of health, well-being, and germ protection — to help keep you, your young child, and your home happy and healthy.

A Health Program Especially for You

Children have special needs, and are more susceptible to infectious diseases than adults. They are also just learning about personal hygiene habits like frequent and proper handwashing. However, as public health experts, we know that there are several ways to help raise a healthy child and protect him or her from illness, including:

- A healthy diet and lifestyle for you and your growing child to help ensure that you are both better equipped to combat infections, and to minimize the risks of other health problems, such as tooth decay.
- Routine immunizations to protect your child from some serious and sometimes fatal diseases like polio, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, hepatitis, and influenza.
- Thorough personal and home hygiene to help prevent the spread of disease-causing germs to your child and other family members.

Your Healthy Home

The CDC, NAPNP, VNA and LYSOL® partnership team is committed to **education** for the health and well-being of you and your child, and to keeping you and your family **healthy** by providing safe and convenient disinfecting and cleaning solutions for your home.

For more on what we are doing to help you ensure a healthy home, please visit: www.cdc.gov, www.napnap.org, www.vnaa.org, and www.lysol.com.

We wish you all the best in *Looking After You and Your Young Child!*

National Center on Birth Defects
and Developmental Disabilities
Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's
"Learn the Signs. Act Early." Campaign

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Looking After You and Your Young Child

The health and well-being of you and your young child are impacted by many things. Throughout *Looking After You and Your Young Child*, you'll find practical information and tips on topics that can affect both of you.

You'll discover need-to-know advice in such areas as hygiene and well-being, food safety for you and your child, common childhood illnesses, safety, germ prevention at home, and more. In addition, you'll find references to help you locate further information on those subjects of particular interest to you — including important information on early childhood development.

So, read on!

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The web links provided in each chapter were current at time of publication. In the event that they change and/or are no longer available, we suggest that you visit the "home page" of the named organization or company. From there, search for topical information.



WELL-BEING

Emotions

As a mother, you likely find yourself putting the needs of your child first. This is normal -- but it's also important to remember that a happy mom often means a happier child! You need to be aware of your own emotional needs . . . and also be alert to those situations in which you might find yourself needing help.

Take Time for Yourself

Many women carry a high burden of stress, between work, family, financial pressures, and even pressure to fulfill social obligations. But while “doing it all” might seem like a worthwhile goal — it’s important not to let pressure and stress make you sick.

Here are ways to help you handle your stress.

- **Relax.** Choose something that calms you down — like deep breathing, yoga, meditation, or massage therapy. Or, take a few minutes just to sit, listen to soothing music, or read a book.
- **Make time for yourself.** Set aside at least 15 minutes each day to do something for yourself, like taking a bubble bath, going for a walk, or calling a friend.
- **Sleep.** Stress can get worse if you don’t get enough sleep. Lack of sleep also makes it harder to fight off illness.
- **Eat right.** Follow a pattern of good nutrition to keep yourself feeling healthy.
- **Get moving.** Work toward getting 30 minutes of exercise each day. It will help your body make “endorphins,” a chemical that relieves stress and improves your mood.
- **Talk to friends.** Opening up to your partner or a friend can help you work through your stress. Friends are good listeners — and are likely to be eager to help you in any way they can.

Depression

Depression affects the body, mood, and thoughts. And according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), about twice as many women are identified as having depression as men.

Depression that does not go away is called “clinical depression.” It is different from feeling “blue” or down for a few hours or a couple of days, and it is a serious illness that needs to be treated.

Symptoms of depression may include:

- Feeling restless or irritable
- Feeling sad, hopeless, and overwhelmed
- Crying a lot
- Having no energy or motivation
- Eating too little or too much
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Trouble focusing, remembering, or making decisions
- Feeling worthless and guilty
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities you used to enjoy
- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Having headaches, chest pains, heart palpitations (the heart beating fast and feeling like it is skipping beats), or hyperventilation (fast and shallow breathing)

What Causes Depression?

Many things can cause depression. These include:

- Family history of depression
- Hormonal changes or changes in brain chemistry
- Living through painful and difficult events
- Certain medications for cancer, arthritis, heart problems, and high blood pressure
- Some illnesses, such as Parkinson’s disease, stroke, diabetes, and hormonal problems

The important thing to remember is that it’s not your fault that you are depressed, and you can and should get better.

Dealing With Depression

Most people with depression get better when they get treatment. If you suspect that you are depressed, talk to your partner, a family member, or a member of your healthcare team and get help. If necessary, your health professional may refer you to a specialist for treatment. The treatment is often managed by nurse practitioners specializing in mental health.

The most important thing to remember is that depression **needs to be treated** by a health professional. Counseling, support groups, and medicines can help. Sometimes treatment can include one or more of the following:

- **Medication:** Antidepressant medications are an essential part of treatment for women who are moderately to severely depressed.
- **Therapy:** This involves talking with a trained professional (psychologist, psychiatrist, clinical nurse, or social worker) on a short-term (12 to 20 weeks) or long-term basis and can take many forms. Two strategies that are particularly effective for depression are Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, which targets changing negative thoughts and behaviors into positive thoughts and behaviors, and Interpersonal Therapy (IPT), which helps you deal with changing roles, relationships, and other stressors.
- **Alternative medicine, herbal remedies, and dietary supplements:** Scientific studies of these alternative forms of treatment have so far been short-term and not well controlled; in addition, dietary supplements are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration. Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you are taking an herbal or dietary supplement, as some of them may negatively interact with antidepressant medication or other medications you are taking. For more information, visit www.cfsan.fda.gov.
- **Support:** It is very important that you get support for yourself and communicate your needs to others. Ask for help!

Support is Critical

If you are experiencing symptoms of depression, get support for yourself and communicate your needs to others. Ask for professional help!

About Common Mood Disorders

According to HHS, common mood disorders — like depression and bipolar disorder — affect up to **44 million Americans** each year.

To learn more about common mood disorders and their treatment, visit the **National Mental Health Information Center** online at mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/ken98-0049/default.asp

- **Exercise:** Exercising increases Serotonin, a neuro-transmitter that lifts moods, provides perspective and a feeling of accomplishment, and enhances self-esteem. Even exercising as little as 10 minutes a day has been found to have beneficial effects! Try to do something physical for 20 to 30 minutes, three times a week or more. Walking is perhaps the most accessible form of exercise because it does not require expensive equipment or gym costs and you can start it immediately. Check with your healthcare provider about the type and length of exercise that's best for you.
- **Stress management:** Stress can make depression worse, and the pressures of motherhood can add stress to a woman's life. Learning to deal more effectively with stress may reduce depression. Identify the main source of stress in your life, and find the most effective way to cope with it (such as avoiding the stress if possible, or using relaxation techniques). Don't forget to identify stressors that you are putting on yourself (trying to be "perfect," or doing too much), and reduce them by setting priorities and letting less-urgent tasks wait.
- **Promoting sleep:** Inadequate sleep can make depression worse. Try to keep your sleep cycle regular by going to bed and waking around the same time; also try relaxing bedtime rituals such as reading or a warm bath.
- **Dietary changes:** Eating a well-balanced diet and having regularly scheduled meals is important in reducing depression. The use of calcium and B vitamins (B6) may help; in addition, decreasing refined sugar, caffeine, alcohol, and chocolate may help promote better sleep.

- **Spending time with others:** Depressed women often withdraw from others because they mistakenly feel they would not be good company. Being with others is another way to gain perspective, which helps with the symptoms of depression. Consider joining a support group for mothers or even a support group for others experiencing depression.
- **Making time to do what you enjoy:** Depressed women sometimes temporarily lose the ability to enjoy themselves. Avoiding enjoyable activities only makes

this worse. Continue doing pleasurable activities even if you don't feel like it. You will soon find that you can enjoy yourself again, at least for short periods.

- **Giving yourself a break!** Trying to “do it all” can overwhelm anyone. Feeling better takes time — but you *will* feel like yourself again, and feel better able to handle the everyday pressures as well as the demands of motherhood. In the meantime, remember to be realistic about the demands and expectations you place on yourself.

➔ For More Information . . .

Depression: www.womenshealth.gov/mh/conditions/depression.cfm

Referrals to specialists and self-help groups in your area: www.dbsalliance.org or call 800-826-3632

Post-Partum Depression: www.lysol.com/pdf/LAYYPPostPartum.pdf



Smoking

Since 1964, 28 reports of the **Surgeon General** have named tobacco use as the single most avoidable cause of disease, disability, and death in the United States.

The **harmful effects of smoking** do not end with the smoker. For example: babies of women who smoke during pregnancy are more likely to have lower birth weights, an increased risk of death from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), and respiratory distress.

Secondhand Smoke

Secondhand smoke has harmful effects on your child. In fact, children are particularly vulnerable to secondhand smoke because, physically, they are still developing — and they have a higher breathing rate than adults. **Children exposed to secondhand smoke** are at risk of a number of health issues, including:

- Asthma
- Infections like pneumonia and bronchitis
- Middle ear infections
- Hearing impairment
- Allergies
- SIDS
- Developmental delays
- Becoming smokers themselves

They are also more likely to develop adult diseases related to smoking, including lung cancer and heart disease.

- Smokeless tobacco, cigars, and pipes also have deadly consequences, including lung, larynx, esophageal, and oral cancers.
- Low-tar cigarettes and other tobacco products are not safe alternatives.

If you can't stop smoking for your young child, you should at least do everything you can to keep your child away from the majority of the smoke. Recent studies have demonstrated that smoking outside, by a window, or changing clothes after smoking is not enough. Toxins from a cigarette permeate the skin and stick to the hair of the smoker and are easily passed to the skin and lungs of a child.

- If you or any of your family members or visitors smoke, you/they should not smoke in your house.
- One of the worst places to smoke is in the family car. Even if the windows are cracked or open, your cigarette smoke can permeate the air.

In addition, children exposed to a *smoker*, not just the *smoke*, are found to have nicotine and other dangerous toxins, in their blood stream.

About Quitting

If you have children, stop smoking. If you can't stop on your own — get help to stop. Quitting smoking has immediate as well as long-term benefits for you and your loved ones. And remember — it is never “too late” to quit smoking.

Some women quit smoking when they are pregnant, but start back up after the baby is born. Many of those women do it because they are hoping to lose weight faster. However, mothers who smoke often don't realize that their smoking can affect a young child even more than a fetus (see *Secondhand Smoke* on page 9).

Quit for Good!

Though quitting for good can be hard, the benefits are worth it: a healthier you, a healthier child, and many more years of good health to enjoy with him or her. Plus, if a mother quits smoking, her partner is more likely to stop smoking, and other relatives are more likely to refrain from smoking around her and her children. So, the benefits grow and grow.

For support in quitting, including free quit coaching, a free quit plan, free educational materials, and referrals to local resources, call **1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)**.

➔ For More Information . . .

Quitting Smoking: www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/

Smoking – Effects on Children: www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/sgr_2004/highlights/1.htm

Secondhand Smoke: www.epa.gov/smokefree/healtheffects.html or family.samhsa.gov/be/smoking.aspx



Rest and Exercise

Every parent learns that child-raising has demands that don't follow a standard time schedule. And when you're trying to balance mothering with career, home keeping and other demands — it's easy to become overwhelmed and exhausted.

Tips for Combating Exhaustion

- Remember that **moms need sleep, too**. Don't stay up late trying to fit in extra tasks and “do it all” — rather, take every chance you can to get a good, restful night's sleep. When your child is sleeping — you can, too! Ask others to help with tasks so you can have time with your child and to take care of yourself.
- **Don't overbook your schedule**. Look carefully over your planned activities and responsibilities throughout the week, including “together time” for you and your young child. Hold off on or eliminate activities or tasks that can wait. Balance your time between your health, pleasurable time with your child, time with other family members, home tasks, work, social support, and free time for unexpected events. Parenting does take a lot of work, and the parents who ask for help are generally happier and healthier.
- **Get some exercise each day**. Try a walking routine if you don't have one already — or think about joining a local gym or YWCA. (Always check with your healthcare provider before beginning a new exercise routine.)
- Join a support group or have regular contact with other parents. Finding out about time-saving strategies, resources for help, and other information that can prevent exhaustion is an important preventive factor. Parents are often the best resources for this information.

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Act Early

www.cdc.gov/actearly



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Germ Protection Center

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