

Back-to-school health issues and how to avoid them

SOT

Dr. Ameera Nauman (ah-MEER-ah // NAUW-man)
OSF HealthCare pediatrician

"Use a humidifier. Honey is a great natural cough suppressant. You can do steamy baths. Teach your kids the proper way to cough and blow their nose. Teach them how and when to wash their hands. They should be washing as much as possible throughout the day. I also think eating healthy and maintaining good nutrition is key. Make sure the kids get vitamins with their daily intake of food and drink." (:34)

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"Most pink eye is caused by a virus. But sometimes if we think there's a *bacterial* cause, we'll treat with an antibiotic eyedrop. Pink eye is very contagious. If one person in the house gets it, it can be a domino effect because kids are all over each other. Prevention involves really good handwashing. And if you have a young infant or a child that has complex medical issues, keep them distant from others." (:33)

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"Everyone lacks sleep to some degree. But with kids, we don't realize how much good sleep can affect their ability to learn, emotionally regulate themselves and carry themselves. Sleep also makes sure that immune system gets some rest and is able to help the kid's body stay healthy." (:28)

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"If you have, for example, a nervous Kindergartener, drive by the school the week before classes start. Say 'OK, this is the time we'll be dropping you off here. It's going to be part of your routine.' Give them a fun treat that day. Make it a memory that's positive for them so that when the time comes to go to school, they're ready." (:29)

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"If you know your kids get allergies in August or September, start the allergy medication two weeks before. Before the symptoms are super bad, help your body get ready for them." (:16)

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"Fifteen minutes before recess, gym class or practice, they need to use their inhaler. That's one of the main ways we can try to prevent these asthma attacks from happening and interfering with kids' lives." (:15)