

Back-to-School Health Tips from Local School Nurses

Before the school year starts, be sure your child is up to date with immunizations, preventive health care, and dental visits. Schedule regular check-ups now before the school year gets busy!

Make sleep a priority.

For students, 8-12 hours of rest per night is recommended.

Pack healthy, nutritious foods for lunches and snacks.

Update the school nurse if your child has medical conditions such as life-threatening allergies, asthma, or seizure disorder.

Any current prescription medications needed during the school day should be refilled, clearly labeled, and delivered to school in the original bottle at the start of the year.

Alert your child's teacher and school nurse to any illness, injuries, and changes in family or household structure that may affect their ability to learn.

Limit screen time.

It will work wonders for your child's eyesight, mental health, and overall well-being.

Keep your child home when they are sick.



Get to know your child's school nurse.



Remind your child to bring their eyeglasses and clean their contacts daily.



Incorporate movement into a before-school or after-school routine.

Students do a lot of sitting, so including physical fitness, even in small bursts, is important.

Here's how to reach your child's school nurse:



School: _____

School nurse name: _____

Phone number: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Partnering with Your School Nurse For a Successful School Year

Back to school season is upon us! It's time to get organized and ensure your child is ready for a successful school year. One important part of preparing for back to school is understanding the role of the school nurse and the value they bring to the educational experience. School nurses are committed to keeping students healthy and safe, and, with the support of parents and caregivers, they can help your child have a great year. Here are five things you should keep in mind as you prepare for back to school.

First, remember that the school nurse is a highly-trained resource. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's health, don't hesitate to reach out to the nurse. They can offer guidance and support on everything from managing chronic conditions to dealing with minor illnesses and injuries. School nurses also provide in-school vision and hearing screenings and can even refer or connect students to longer-term health care services.

Second, keep up with immunizations, preventive care, and dental visits. Children entering certain grades are required by the state to have mandated health services—not just vaccines but medical exams, dental exams, and scoliosis screens. Districts may also have their own requirements. Make sure your child is up to date before the start of the school year. If you haven't already done so, call your health care provider now to ensure your child can be scheduled for a visit in the next few weeks. During your visit, obtain your child's updated medication orders if any emergency, daily, or as-needed medications must be available to your child while at school. Deliver the supply to school promptly at the start of the year to prevent any interruption in routine medication administration and ensure your child receives treatment if needed.

If you have questions about state-mandated requirements or district-specific policies, such as medication policies, illness policies, standards of care and routine standard orders along with physical requirements and state-mandated screenings, reach out to the school nurse.

Third, ensure your child has a regular doctor/health care provider and dentist they can see for routine check-ups and sick visits. Regular preventive care visits are key to identifying and addressing a health issue before it becomes a crisis. A consistent provider can help better understand your child's health over time and relay important information to your child's school nurse. If you need help finding a doctor, health care provider, or dentist in your community, ask your school nurse!

Fourth, keep your school nurse in the loop. Along with teachers, school nurses are an integral part of the health care team and educational experience. If you communicate with your child's teacher via email, copy your school nurse if applicable. Along with notifying the school nurse about health changes like medication adjustments or a health diagnosis, big life events can also affect a student's overall mental health, well-being, and life choices. Let your school nurse know about life events like a change in family structure (marriage or divorce), death of a pet, struggles with peer pressure, etc. Your child's school nurse can provide better care if they're aware of the big picture in a student's life. Student health is like a jigsaw puzzle. The finished

picture looks completely different if even a few pieces are missing! Your school nurse wants to hear from you, so consider an email or quick phone call if something big—or small—is going on.

Finally, please keep your child home from school when they are sick. Keeping a sick child home rather than dosing them with medicine to get through the day also helps them recover more quickly and prevents the spread of illness.

The start of the school year is a new beginning. It's also the perfect time to reach out to your child's school nurse, initiate a connection, and be aware of the ways your child's school nurse is an active advocate for student health—and the health of our overall community.



Helpful Links

Physical/medical exam information:
<https://tinyurl.com/68s9twz8>

Physical/medical exam forms:
<https://tinyurl.com/ys5x8trs>

Dental exam form:
<https://tinyurl.com/48h5sux5>

Mandated school health services information: <https://tinyurl.com/k7427rp5>

School health topics A-Z:
<https://tinyurl.com/56f9jmun>