



Winter 2018-19



# Healthy Kids West Virginia

West Virginia Child Care Nurse Health Consultants and Health Educators Newsletter



## Fighting Those Germs By Candy Morgan, RN

Keeping our children healthy is a year-round job but with the colder weather, aka flu season, in full swing, it seems to be a little more difficult. Here are some tips to help protect your family from acquiring those nasty germs you will come in contact with as you work and play.



- ◆ Encourage them to wash their hands- While it is a simple task, many do not perform appropriate handwashing. Handwashing is the most effective method of preventing germs from entering your body. It is appropriate to wash hands for about 20 seconds, scrubbing all areas of your hands, with lots of friction. Washing hands with soap and water is the best choice but if a sink isn't available, use hand sanitizer to remove germs from your hands. The CDC recommends that sanitizer be 90% alcohol to effectively clean your hands when soap and water aren't available.
- ◆ Clean it up- Cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting areas that are frequently touched is a great way to help control the spread of germs. Don't forget those items that are regularly used such as cellphones, gym equipment, laptop and gaming controllers.
- ◆ Keep your distance- Many illnesses are spread when infectious material is expelled into the air when coughing or sneezing. If you notice that someone appears ill, avoid close contact with them. Also stay away from others when you are ill or feverish.
- ◆ Strengthen their resistance to infection- Encourage measures that would decrease the likelihood of succumbing to infectious agents. Getting vaccinated, plenty of rest and eating a healthy diet are just a few ways to boost an individual's immune system.

Making simple changes in your routine can go a long way to managing illness in your family.

[www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)

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# Winter Skin Care for Children By Ronda Hopkins, RN

Skin is the largest organ in our body and plays a very important role in detecting hot and cold, regulating body temperature and protecting muscles, bones and internal organs from outside infection and disease. Our skin is our biggest defender and we need to make sure that we take good care of our skin. This can be exceptionally challenging during the winter months and with young children. Children have more sensitive skin to the cold, dry winter air and are more prone to skin issues such as chapped lips, wind burn and itchy, dry skin. Winter air can also aggravate conditions that already exist such as eczema and diaper rash. Here are some winter skin care tips for kids that will help keep their skin healthy.

## **Dress for the cold**

Dressing children properly for the weather is very important. Using hats to help maintain warmth, gloves to protect the hands and scarfs to protect the face and lips from getting dry, damaged and irritated from the cold. Dressing in layers that can be removed helps keep them from getting overheated. Heat rash can occur in the winter too.

## **Apply Sunscreen**

The sun shines in the winter too! We need to always protect the skin with a broad spectrum sunscreen daily especially when spending time outdoors. Snow is very reflective to UV rays and can bounce back up to 80 percent of the suns UV rays.

## **Moisturize**

Applying a thin layer of moisture after a bath or after washing hands can help keep skin from being dry and flaky. Hand washing is very important in preventing the spread of colds and flu so we do it frequently. Soaps can be very drying to the skin so it is important to keep moisturizer by the sink to help keep hands moisturized during the winter months.

## **Limit bathing**

Bathing frequently can and does dry out our skin as it not only removes dirt but it removes our body's natural oils. Daily bathing is not necessary and not recommended. Children are not getting overly dirty on a daily basis. Limit bath time to 10-15 minutes and do not use overly hot water. Avoid harsh soaps and bubble baths, instead use a moisturizing soap.

## **Humidify**

When the heat is turned on for the year it can cause many skin issues. The heated air is very dry and will dry out our skin and sinus passages. If we use a humidifier to send moisture into the air it can help prevent dry, itchy skin, dry throats and nose bleeds (due to irritated sinus passages from dry air).

## **Treat skin issues**

Already existing skin issues will need extra care in the winter. If a child already has eczema it is a good idea to have on hand a barrier-repair product approved by a licensed health care provider since some over the counter lotions can actually do more harm than good. Staying moisturized can go a long way in preventing the condition from going from mild to severe. The same idea goes with treating diaper rash, chapped skin and lips.

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## Homemade Pomegranate Juice Submitted by Renee Y. Stonebraker

1. Put pomegranate seeds into a blender. Blend until smooth.
2. Strain the resulting juice with a cheesecloth.
3. Serve and enjoy!



## How to Remove Pomegranate Seeds Under Water

1. Fill a bowl with cold water.
2. Cut the pomegranate into four quarters.
3. Place quarters in bowl of water.
4. Gently pry the seeds from the pomegranate skin.
5. Scoop the seeds out of the water and place them in a bowl until ready to use.



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## Ideas for Winter Walks submitted by Renee Y. Stonebraker

**Search for animal tracks.** Go on a hunt to identify animal tracks in the snow, and guess which animal left them there. See how many different tracks you can identify.



**Go on a scavenger hunt.** Create a list of items for children to find outdoors, such as pinecones, rocks, sticks, or leaves. Give each child or group a container to collect the items on the list.



**Talk about Winter.** Point out animals, birds, icicles and other unique winter features.



Winter Outdoor Activities for Preschoolers. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.himama.com/blog/winter-outdoor-activities-for-preschoolers?cat1=Activities&cat2=Parenting>

# Winter Car Seat Safety by Rachel Richard, RN

Winter is a time for snow, holidays, and big, fluffy coats. While these are beneficial in keeping your children warm, they can be dangerous when worn in a car seat. If a bulky coat or snowsuit is worn in a car seat and a crash occurs, they flatten out and leave extra space between the harness and the child. This can cause the child to slip through the straps and be ejected from the car seat.



To prevent this hazard, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) provides some helpful tips to keep children safe this winter season.

- Apply a coat or blanket **OVER** the harness. Lay a blanket over top of the straps or put your child's coat on backwards over the secured harness, to prevent space between your child and the straps. Keep in mind this top layer should remain removable, to prevent overheating.
- Keep the carrier portion inside when not in use. Storing the seat at room temperature will decrease the loss of body heat when your child is placed in the carrier.
- Dress your child in thin layers. Begin with tights, long-sleeved body suits, or leggings. Then add a sweater or thermal shirt. Remember, infants should wear one more layer than adults. If you have a hat and a coat on, your infant will probably need a hat, coat, and blanket.
- Remember hats, mittens, and socks! These clothing items help ensure children stay warm without interfering with the safety harness.
- Only use car seat covers that do **NOT** include a layer under the baby. Be sure to leave baby's face uncovered to avoid trapped air and re-breathing.
- Ensure the straps of the car seat are tightened. Multiple layers can make it difficult to ensure a properly fitted harness. Perform the "Pinch Test" to ensure an appropriate fit. If you can pinch the straps of the car seat harness, then it needs to be tightened to fit snugly against your child's chest.
- Remember, if the item did not come with the car seat, it has not been crash-tested and may interfere with the protection provided in a crash. Never use sleeping bag inserts or other stroller accessories in the car seat.

Information was acquired from the American Academy of Pediatrics, [HealthyChildren.org](http://HealthyChildren.org).

These safety measures will ensure your child is kept safe for all winter travel this season.

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