

Watchung Pediatrics Messenger

Winter Issue

2016-2017

Patient Portal



Visit our secure patient portal at our new link, <http://watchung.pcc.com/portal>, to communicate with us easily, anytime and anywhere. Send secure emails to request referrals, prescription renewals, and appointments, ask our billing department questions, or contact your provider. Also, save a trip to the office by viewing and printing referrals and vaccine records at your convenience.

If you have not already signed up, email us at watchpeds.portal@gmail.com with your child(ren)'s name(s), date(s) of birth, and legal guardian's name. After signing up you'll receive an email with instructions on setting up your account.

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Follow That Bag!



Along with the spectacular floats and massive balloons, Connor's Watchung Pediatrics' bag was spotted at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade in New York City. If you have taken a trip to the beach, gone on vacation, or have travelled anywhere with your drawstring bag, send a picture to watchungpeds@gmail.com with the subject line "Follow that bag". Include a sentence about where you were so everyone knows where your Watchung Pediatrics' bag has been!

By submitting your picture you are giving permission to Watchung Pediatrics to post the image online, in the newsletters, and within any of the offices. By submitting your child's name with the picture, you are also granting permission for your child's name to be included.

While you won't be remunerated for the picture, you are granted bragging rights!

New Year's Resolutions for Kids

The New Year is a good time to set healthy goals and lifestyle changes for you and your children. New Year's resolutions are unique and different for everyone, but there are several common goals that many people share; one of which is creating healthy eating habits. Detailed below are instructions and tips on establishing these trends.

- Establish a routine with regular meal and snack times, and always eat meals at the table. Children who eat meals with their family consume more fruits, vegetables, fiber, protein, calcium-rich foods and vitamins.
- Avoid soda, which is full of empty calories and artificial sweeteners. Milk and water are the best drink choices for your children.
- Eat a variety of foods with different flavors, colors and textures.

Encouraging active play and exercise is also a good start to the New Year. Regular exercise is a good habit to teach your children from a young age.

- Don't let a full day go by without active play. Take trips to the park, play in the yard, go for walks, and make physical activity a part of your family's daily routine.
- Encourage your children to take part in sports teams, gymnastics and dance classes, and other activities that will get them moving.
- Aerobic activity should make up most of your child's 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day.



Mobile Devices Can Affect Children's Sleep

A study from a leading medical journal reveals that allowing mobile devices in the bedrooms of children and adolescents can cause sleep problems and daytime sleepiness. The study, published in The Journal of American Medical Association, looked at more than 26,000 children aged 6 to 19. The authors concluded that children exposed to electronic media devices at bedtime are about 50 percent more likely to get inadequate or poor-quality sleep and to feel drowsy during the daytime.

Growing children and adolescents need more sleep than adults. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children 6 to 12 years of age should sleep 9 to 12 hours per day and teenagers 13 to 18 years of age should sleep 8 to 10 hours per day for optimal health. Electronic devices can work against quality sleep in a number of ways. Light from glowing screens can suppress the brain's level of melatonin, a hormone that causes feelings of drowsiness. This can shift sleep cycles to later bedtimes, which can lead to sleep deprivation. Smartphone alerts and texts during sleep can cause children to wake repeatedly during the night. These effects on the quality and quantity of sleep may result in health problems including obesity, attention problems, hyperactivity, learning difficulties, anxiety, and depression.

We recommend following these rules to ensure that your child's sleep is not disturbed by electronic devices:

For all age children -

- Don't allow electronic media including TVs, laptop computers, tablets, smartphones, and game consoles in bedrooms
- Encourage at least one hour of vigorous physical play or exercise each day
- Set devices to automatically switch to night mode in the evening to limit blue light, which is more stimulating to the brain
- Set a good example by limiting your own use of handhelds in the evenings
- Stop your child's use of electronic devices at least one hour before bedtime

For school-age children -

- Monitor what your child views to avoid frightening, over-stimulating content that may disturb sleep
- Read to children at bedtime
- Establish a regular bedtime and nighttime routines and try to adhere to them on weekends as well as school nights



For adolescents -

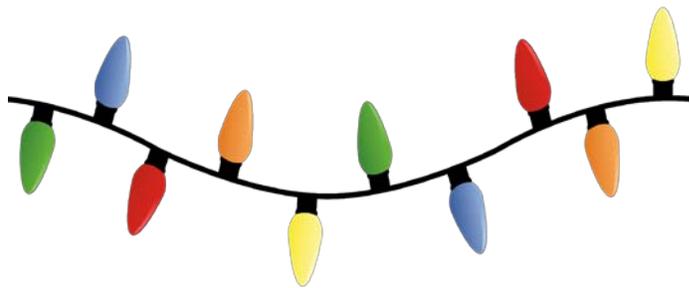
- Set expectations with your teen regarding what you consider to be reasonable limits on use of electronic devices in the evening, eg for homework
- Do not allow your teen to sleep with a smartphone in their bed
- Monitor the content of games and videos to avoid violent and sexual content

Talk to your teenager about the dangers of online pornography, sexting, and social media abuses, eg cyberbullying, predators.

Tips for Holiday Safety

The best part of the winter season is looking forward to spending the holidays with family and friends. Embrace the holiday cheer, but remember to keep your children healthy and safe with these tips about holiday decorations, food, and managing stress.

- Be smart and safe when decorating your home for the holidays. When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant."
- When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces, radiators, or portable heaters. Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways.
- Turn off all decorative lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire.
- Remove tags, strings, and ribbons from toys before giving them to young children.
- Take caution when preparing family meals for the holidays. Fully cook meats and poultry to kill bacteria, thoroughly wash raw vegetables and fruits, always keep raw foods and cooked foods separate, wash your hands frequently, and make sure your children do the same.
- Stick to a normal daily routine during the stressful holiday season, as many adults become overwhelmed during the holidays and may influence their children to feel the same way.
- Most important of all, enjoy the holidays for what they are - time to enjoy being with your family. So do things together like sledding or playing board games, and spend time visiting relatives, neighbors, and friends.



Winter Health

During the winter months, it is important to keep your children warm, safe, and healthy. The viruses that cause colds and the flu tend to be more common in the winter, when children are in school and are in closer contact with each other. Frequent hand washing and teaching your children to sneeze or cough into the bend of the elbow may help reduce the spread of colds and the flu. Children six months of age and up should get the influenza vaccine to reduce their risk of catching the flu. If your child suffers from winter nosebleeds, try using a cold air humidifier in the child's room at night.

Keep your child warm and dry during outdoor activities by dressing them in layers - don't forget warm boots, gloves or mittens, and a hat. The rule of thumb for older babies and young children is to dress them in one more layer of clothing than an adult would wear in the same conditions. Don't forget sun protection - the sun's rays can still cause sunburn in the winter, especially when they reflect off snow. Make sure to cover your child's exposed skin with sunscreen and consider using sunglasses



Holiday Habits for Families

Holiday season is here and for most of us that means food, food and more food! It's likely you and your family will be attending numerous holiday parties and possibly even hosting one. So how can you make the festivities a little healthier for your family?

1. Practice mindful eating at holiday parties by feeding your children and yourself a healthy snack or a light meal before heading out for the party. It's easier to avoid overeating when you're not overly hungry. Fill up on fruits and vegetables that are in season.
2. You don't have to say no, just say "yes" to less. Agree to share a serving of a favorite holiday indulgence with a family member or friend.
3. Avoid skipping meals- especially breakfast. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day because it provides energy to jumpstart your body and mind. It's also important in maintaining a healthy body weight throughout this holiday season.
4. Make time for rest. We often get worn out this time of year and try to re-energize by eating sometimes when we're not hungry. Over time, lack of sleep may lead to weight gain and obesity.
5. Create a "healthier" version of "soda" by mixing 100% fruit juice with club soda or seltzer, to avoid excessive sugar and calorie intake.
6. Keep moving! It might be difficult to prioritize regular fitness routines during the busy holiday season but there are plenty of opportunities to get more active throughout the day - by taking the stairs instead of the elevator, do winter chores such as raking leaves or shoveling snow, or grab a friend and go for a walk. Get the whole family moving with ice skating or sledding, or just simply dancing at home to your favorite tunes!
7. Avoid the drive thru line by keeping non-perishable snacks in the car such as homemade trail mix or high fiber, low sugar granola bars.
8. Find ways to swap out ingredients in holiday recipes for healthier alternatives to lower the amounts of fat, added sugar, and calories children consume.
 - Bananas for butter is a simple way to cut calories without sacrificing taste and texture (and a good way to use the bananas that come back home in your kids' lunchboxes). One half cup of butter has 814 calories while the same amount of mashed banana is only 100 calories. The substitution ratio is 1:1 so you can substitute mashed banana for butter in all your favorite baked recipes.
 - Try substituting fat-free Greek yogurt for sour cream in your next pile of creamy mashed potatoes and save yourself almost 50 calories and 6 grams of fat per ounce.
 - Instead of 1 whole egg, try substituting 2 egg whites. This will drastically lower the fat and cholesterol content of any recipe.
9. Think Family-wide. When parents encourage and model healthy habits at home it helps make the healthy choice the easy choice. Maintaining a healthy diet through the holidays is good practice for the whole family, not just the children.

Happy and Healthy Holiday from our family to yours!

KIDS KORNER

Marshmallow Snowmen

Ingredients:

- Marshmallows
- Melted caramels
- Gingersnaps
- Decorative elements (sprinkles, royal icing, pretzel -sticks, spice drops, fruit leather, food coloring and pink Cake Mate Decors)



Directions:

1. Dip a marshmallow in melted caramel; place on a gingersnap. Put sprinkles over excess caramel. Halve a marshmallow for head and attach with royal icing. Insert pretzels in body.
2. Flatten a spice drop; attach another to form hat. Cut scarves and bow ties from fruit leather; tuck under head. Dye royal icing and pipe eyes, nose and buttons. Attach pink Decors for cheeks.

Winter Word Search

winter word search



s	b	e	k	q	v	a	m
n	f	c	o	c	o	a	i
o	h	r	w	b	e	l	+
w	a	c	g	m	s	x	+
f	+	s	c	a	r	f	e
l	a	h	n	+	y	c	n
a	d	o	s	l	e	d	i
k	s	n	o	w	m	a	n
e	j	p	u	z	d	f	p



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Pipe Cleaner Snowflake

Materials:

- 2 silver pipecleaners
- 3 blue pipecleaners



Directions:

1. Cut the two silver pipe cleaners in half. Put one piece aside so you have 3. Twist these three pieces together in the centre so that you have a shape with six points (look at the photo above for help with this).
2. Cut the blue pipe cleaners in half and then in half again. You will have 12 pieces. Twist these on to the silver base to decorate your snowflake.
3. If you want to hang your snowflake, take the piece of silver pipe cleaner you put aside, fold in half and twist the ends to one of the snowflake points to make a loop.

Silly Winter-time Jokes

Why do seals swim in salt water?

Because pepper water makes them sneeze!

What do you call an elf who sings?

A wrapper!

How do you keep from getting cold feet?

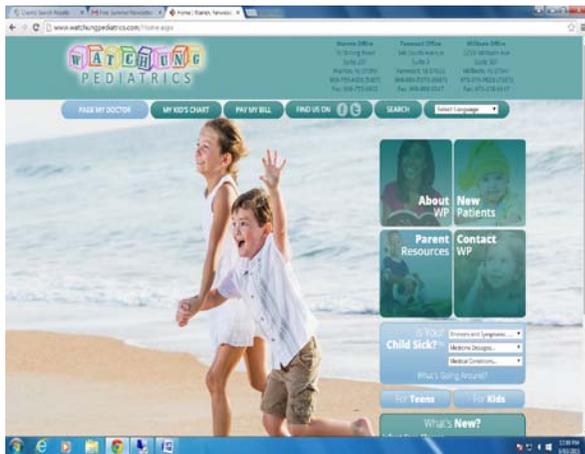
Don't go around BRRfooted!

Have you visited our Website?

Have you visited our state-of-the-art website?

In addition to information about our offices, medical staff, providers and services provided, our website includes such useful features as a user friendly Pediatric symptom checker, a library of medical information with content from the American Academy of Pediatrics, a *What's Going Around?* Section that contains information about community news, separate sections with information geared for teens and children with educational games for kids, as well as *Dr. B's* blog and social media feeds. All this can be found at:

<http://watchungpediatrics.com/>



Are you a member of our LISTSERV?

Want to receive timely emails from Watchung Pediatrics with the latest news and updates including Flu vaccine arrival, appointment availability or office closures? Then please visit our website to sign up for the Watchung Pediatrics' LISTSERV.

Important Resources

Infant Care and Expectant Parent Classes:

wpseminars@gmail.com

Referral Requests: 908-755-5437 x 6

To enroll in the appointment reminder system:

wpconfirmations@gmail.com

Have You Seen Our App?

Our Watchung Pediatrics mobile app that enables our families to have access to our website and all of its wonderful features when at home or on the go!

Please follow these instructions on how to download the app to your smart phone.

1. Search for *Your Practice* in the app store and download the app (later you will choose Watchung Pediatrics)
2. Open the app and search for Watchung Pediatrics
3. Choose Watchung Pediatrics
4. Connect with Watchung Pediatrics anywhere, anytime



Have you signed up for our portal?

Save a call or trip to the office by accessing your child's medical records through our secure portal at

<http://watchung.pcc.com/portal>. Our new patient portal is easy to use and lets you communicate with us at any time and from anywhere!