

HEALTH AND FEEDING OF CHILDREN

God's will concerning our health and the health of our children is simply stated in III John 2: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." The following subjects are basic principles of health that will help you in building and maintaining your child's health.

I. Good, Wholesome Food and Water

Breast milk is the best food to feed an infant. The first milk is called colostrum. In it are many antibodies that build resistance to many diseases for the newborn child. It is best to feed your infant only mother's milk for the first ten months. If a mother is unable to nurse, raw goat's milk may be used. If raw goat's milk is not available, eugalen (an extract from milk) can be added to cow's milk. Babies need milk up to two years of age. Some children need milk up to three years of age.

From ten months to one year, a few liquids and solids may be introduced. These should be fed at room or body temperature. Diluted fig pep may be given. One teaspoon of fig pep to eight ounces of water is an adequate dilution. However, the primary liquid intake should still be breast milk. Choose only a few from the following list of liquids and solids.

You can soak dried fruits that do not contain sulphur dioxide, and the liquid obtained will be good-tasting as well as nutritious. (Almost any dried fruit purchased in a grocery store contains sulphur dioxide. Check the ingredients carefully.) You can use dried apples, apricots, currants, dates, figs, pears, prunes, or raisins, or juices from watermelon or cantaloupe. You can also juice fresh fruits. Dilute juices with at least half water.

When you introduce solid foods, begin with fresh raw fruits: apricots, avocados, apples, bananas, mangoes, peaches, and pears. Take an apple, cut in half and scrape the apple with a teaspoon. It will come off like applesauce. The same can be done with pears. Introduce one solid food at a time. Wait two weeks before trying another new food. This will give your child's body a chance to adapt to it. Feed the solid food after the baby has been nursed. Solids should be introduced when the baby is happy, not when tired or irritable. This will enable you to introduce more foods and you'll be able to get him or her to eat more foods. Solid foods can be given to the child once or twice daily before age one.

There are three times when a baby or an infant will appear not to be getting enough food. This will occur at about the age of six weeks, three months, and six months. At these ages, the baby has a growth spurt and an increased need for his mother's milk. Many doctors will tell a mother she should start introducing foods at six months because the baby is not getting enough milk. The doctor is quite accurate in saying that you're not producing enough milk. But, the way to resolve this is to take a day or two and nurse your baby as often as it's hungry. What this does is stimulate your milk production, and the more you nurse a baby, the more milk you will produce. The less you nurse the baby, the less milk you will produce. It's a supply and demand situation.

One to two years. Continue using the same solids and liquids listed under ten months to one year. The primary liquid should still be milk. At this time you can start introducing milk with a cup. At this age the following may be introduced: Oatmeal cereal or muesli soaked with raw nut milk. Oatmeal is one of the easiest grains to digest, both for children and for older people. Sprouts may be introduced. Mash them so they will be easy to digest. Alfalfa is one of the best sprouts since it is very tender. A few baked or steamed vegetables, such as carrots, yams, squash, potatoes, or, stock from steamed vegetables, or vegetable broth can be introduced.

A young child simply does not have the teeth to eat raw vegetables. The only way they can be easily eaten is cooked. Powdered Green Life, a vitamin supplement, is an excellent product that can be added to any number of foods.

Carrot or celery sticks can be given to the baby for teething. When they chew on these they get some of the juices, so they will be getting some vitamins and minerals simply from chewing on those carrot or celery sticks. Once they begin to get a couple of teeth in the front, you need to watch them very carefully because once in a while they can bite off a piece of carrot or celery.

Begin simple food combinations by serving one or two foods at the same meal. For example, serve fig pep on oatmeal or sprouts with a vegetable. Don't get into a lot of food combining the first year. Do not give them a wide variety of foods at one time. If the food that is eliminated is the same color and texture as it was when eaten, your child is not digesting that food and he's not ready for it, nor is he getting the nutrition from it.

Whole grain bread may be introduced at about 18 months. The reason for not introducing whole grain bread before this time is that the enzymes necessary for digesting whole grains are not fully developed, and your child may not properly digest this food.

Homemade whole grain breads, unsweetened familia, grains and cereals, raw vegetables (if the child can chew the vegetables properly), plain yogurt, natural cheese, natural cottage cheese, berries, and nut butters can now be introduced. The cheeses should be the soft cheeses, not the hard ones. Soft cheeses are more easily digested. One of the best soft cheeses is a Danish butter cheese called Havarti.

By the time a child is three years old, the primary liquid consumed should be water--not Koolaid, not fruit juices, not soft drinks, but water. Teach your children to drink water. All throughout the Word of God people drank water. Juices have a high concentration of sugar in them. If a child has a tendency to get wired from eating sugar products, the same thing will happen if he drinks fruit juices because of the high concentration of sugar. The best liquid for your child is water. The same is true for adults.

Two to three years. At this age the following foods may be introduced: whole nuts and seeds (if the child has teeth to chew them properly), fertile eggs.

Four to five years. Meat may be introduced if desired. Children should be encouraged to eat at mealtime only. Any snacks should consist of fresh raw fruits and vegetables or dried fruits and raw nuts and seeds.

A child is not born knowing what he should do in life. Proverbs states: "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child." What kind of a decision do you think your child is going to make regarding most foods? Foolish decisions. You need to be making the decisions for your child's food. Do not allow your child to dictate to you what he should be eating. You are the one who is in charge; you are the one who should be instructing your child what foods to eat.

If you keep potato chips, candy, pop--all these things--in your home and you eat them, your children will follow your example. Your child will learn to eat whatever you feed him. In all cultures this is true. Children eat what their parents eat. Examine your food very carefully, because your children, even when they're just sitting in the high chair, want to eat whatever you're eating. The taste buds become educated.

Your child's diet should consist of plenty of raw foods. Foods should be neither sweetened nor salted so your child will not develop an unnatural taste for these flavors. Foods contain enough natural sweeteners.

The Complete Book of Natural Foods by Fred Rohe is an excellent resource book for your personal library.

II. Children Need Rest

An important preventive measure is to make sure your children are getting plenty of rest. Unruliness, disobedience, a lot of things, go on with a child emotionally as a result of not enough rest, not enough sleep. When a person is short on sleep, he becomes short-tempered, more easily irritated by people, irrational, poor at making decisions, shaky, and depressed, and he finds it hard to concentrate. This is true for children, too.

The result of a tired child in combination with the fact that foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, and his lack of control over his emotions, is a child who is unruly, having emotional outbursts of temper or rebellion--anything is likely to flare up when a child is tired. Children need plenty of rest.

When children don't have enough rest and negative emotions take hold within them, it sets up chemical reactions in their bodies that add a lot of waste material to their systems that need to be cleaned out. Their entire immune system begins to wear down and they cannot resist infections, viruses, all kinds of things that may come along. Also, when a child is very tired, his food is digested improperly. It's very important for your child to get plenty of rest.

Besides rest, a routine is important. At two children still need an afternoon nap; children require more sleep than adults. Make sure that your children are getting plenty of rest. Put them on a routine. Routine is an important aspect of health. Your body begins to fit into that routine. You need to determine what kind of routine you're going to put your child on and fit it with your life-style. Routine gives him a sense of security.

Children like to know when things are going to happen. They like to know that they follow a regular pattern. In order to get your children into bed, make it a happy time. Never allow children to complain about going to bed. Bedtime should be a happy time.

Attitude is vitally important. You make up your mind what you want to do and teach your children to do the same thing. It's an important principle. Your children will be healthier because of their positive attitude. If they think negatively, if they're unhappy and upset about all the situations that are inevitable in life (like going to bed or eating at a certain time), they're going to be unhappy and miserable. This sets up the negative chemical reactions in the body that will cause your children not to be as healthy. It's very important to teach your child the proper attitude about food, about rest, about all the necessary things that life requires.

III. Fresh Air and Light are Very Important

In our civilized culture, we do not get the amount of fresh air that people did when they lived in an agricultural setting. We have an industrial and technological culture in this country. We still need the fresh air.

In winter, heated air in the home can be very dry. You may want to add moisture to the air to prevent drying and irritation of the nasal and respiratory passages. This will help cut down on sore throats and colds. Humidifiers are beneficial, or pans of water set near heat sources. Cool-air vaporizers are helpful for someone who has respiratory congestion.

Light is very important. Children need light--sunlight. One of the ways that the body receives vitamin D is from the sun. Your body will manufacture it if you spend time out in the sunlight. There are other things that you can eat, like cod-liver oil. Health and Light, written by John Ott, would be an excellent book for your library.

Make sure that your children are getting plenty of sunlight. Also, it's very important to get light into your eyes. It dramatically affects your health. Do not allow your children to wear sunglasses. Sunglasses can be very harmful to your eyes because of the way it filters the light, and wearing them can actually affect your ability to adjust to bright light and sunlight--then you can gradually lose that ability. It's important to encourage your children not to wear sunglasses. The only time that you should wear sunglasses is where the light is extremely bright, or if you're driving toward the sun and the light is already being filtered through the glass of your car window. Sunlight is another important aspect of maintaining your child's health.

IV. A Peaceful Atmosphere

A peaceful and happy atmosphere is very important for your child's health. Strife in a household, arguing, whining, or crying, disrupts the peace of your household. Music also affects the peaceful atmosphere of your home. You can create many different atmospheres with music. You can generate a cheerful atmosphere or a healing atmosphere. For example, if someone isn't feeling well, there are certain types of music that are soothing and healing. If you want to work, play up-beat music.

It is important, with little children, to be careful not to jostle them around if you want to keep them peaceful and happy. Jostling is not the best for them. Instead, hold them close to you, warmly and securely, providing the comfort little children need. Roughhousing just before children go to bed is not the best thing to do for them. If you go out and have a tickle session with them just before they're ready to go to bed, it's going to be much more difficult for them to settle down. Provide quiet, peaceful activities like reading to them or giving them a warm bath, so they're relaxed and ready to go to sleep. These are little things you need to watch out for if you want a peaceful, happy atmosphere.

V. Order and Cleanliness

It's very important to maintain order and cleanliness in your household. TV dramatically affects the peace of your household. Color is an important aspect of maintaining peace in your home. The earth colors, the greens and the blues, the colors of nature, generally are more peaceful and create a more pleasing atmosphere in a room. The brighter colors are for accent colors. You can study how God has used color; that will help you to select the colors for your room.

VI. Observing Your Child's Health

Check your children daily. Look to see what's going on in their bodies. Look at their eyes, faces, and how they carry themselves. You need to be continually observing your child to see what is going on in his body, both the good and bad things. The sooner you pick up on the signs in their bodies, the quicker you can nip an illness in the bud and avoid a crisis.

Keep a close watch over your children. Do a daily check on your children every day to see the brightness of their eyes, their complexion, what's going on in their bodies, how they walk. The eyes are one of the first areas where you'll notice a symptom when they're not feeling well. If they have a nice, bright, clear, mischievous look in their eyes, you know they're feeling well. If they start getting quiet and their eyes become dull, this is a signal that there are some things that are going on in their bodies that need to be taken care of.

Another signal is a change of temperament. If they are irritable but getting plenty of rest, you'll want to take note of that. Also, note the flush in the cheeks. You can often prevent fevers by catching the first pink tinge in their cheeks and getting them to drink plenty of water. Water flushes their system out.

Stay on top of these things. Step on the little fires. Take care of a situation before it becomes a crisis situation. Feed them something that has more vitamin C, or have them eat fresh fruit for a little while, or a salad. If you suspect an infection and notice the beginning symptoms, prepare a salad with lots of raw potato in it. Fix a salad or two every week prepared with raw potatoes in it. Make sure they get plenty of water and have plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Plain yogurt can also help prevent a lot of undesirable situations. For example, if you're going to be traveling, changing water and environments often, you may come down with diarrhea. Your children especially will do this. One way to possibly help prevent this is to give them plain yogurt when you know there's going to be a change in their lives. It helps build up the bacteria in their colons that they need to prevent diarrhea. This is also true for constipation. Plain yogurt is very good for that.

There are any number of reasons for your child's body breaking down. There are many things that children go through--any stress will cause the body to begin to have more wear. If your child is going through a change, such as when he starts back to school in the fall, you need to carefully observe him. Changes of the season and temperature changes also affect health. You need to be aware of that to make sure children wear the proper clothing.

Teething is another time that children go through changes in their bodies. When they cut certain teeth, they'll wake up more at night or become more feverish. Another thing you need to be sure of is that your child has regular bowel movements. You need to ask them. They need to let you know. If they miss a day, a good thing to help them get started (or you, too) is to drink a glass of hot water before bed at night and then drink another one the first thing in the morning. Generally, this will bring the body right out of constipation.

You need to teach your children to think God's Word when anything happens. If they notice symptoms in their own bodies, teach them this thought, "God healed it." If they fall down and get injured, their first thought needs to be, "God healed it." You can teach them to say that before they say anything else; that will help them recover faster than anything. If they fall on their heads and they're about to get a big lump, teach them that as soon as they fall they say, "God healed it." Even one- and two-year-olds can learn to say this.

Teach your children to think the Word, and what the Word says about health. Teach them the simple principles of drinking plenty of water, eating proper foods, and getting plenty of rest. Your children need to know these principles. If they understand what you're doing and why, they will be much more willing to accept it themselves.

If you miss the early symptoms and the situation is more advanced, and water and fruits and vegetables don't take care of it (for example, if a fever gets quite high--around 104°), then you need to take some sort of action right away. A low-grade fever (around 100° or 101°) generally is not harmful--it can be very beneficial; wait it out. Make sure your children are getting plenty of liquids. Six to eight ounces of water in an hour is adequate. The low-grade fevers burn waste materials in their bodies. However, if their temperature is 101° longer than three days, you need to seek professional advice. One thing you can do for higher fevers is give them one enema. The water should be lukewarm. This is often one quick way to bring a fever down and keep it down.

If you've done all these things and your child is still sick, you should see a doctor. Your child may have contracted a particularly virulent virus, or a bacteria that is very strong, that the natural remedies didn't work on. This is when you need to see a doctor and do something quick to get rid of it. Knock it rather than letting it knock your child. Do not feel guilty about seeing the doctor. The goal is to get your child well, not to condemn yourself.

Last, but certainly not least in importance: All children need consistent loving and touching. It is an excellent preventive measure. The loving touch is very healing when your child is not feeling well. It is very comforting and reassuring for children (adults, too!) to be cuddled and held. When they are not feeling well, they will need much more of this. A good book for your personal library on this subject is How to Really Love Your Child by Ross Campbell.