

Parents: Autumn Tips to Help Keep Your Kids Safe and Healthy

Kids are going back to school, the weather is getting cooler, and the leaves are beginning to change color. Autumn is on its way! Greet the fall with ways to help keep you and your family safe and healthy.



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Be active.

As the weather cools, resist the urge to hibernate! Make fall yard work fun. Have kids come up with different ways to pick up leaves or pine cones (i.e. squatting, bending, leaning, stretching, or balancing on one foot). Provide kids with rakes and other tools that are kid-sized for comfort and safety. For indoor fun, play board games and computer games that encourage physical activity. Have a song-and-dance talent show. Draw, color and explore with health in mind. Remember that children and adolescents should be active for at least one hour a day, and adults should be active for at least 2½ hours a week. Don't forget to apply sunscreen and insect repellent to protect you and your family from the sun, mosquitoes, and ticks.

Be prepared for school.

Safety should be on every student's back to school list. Whether it is by car, bus, bike, or foot, the minute a child leaves their home, safety becomes a concern. Go over your child's transportation plan and discuss things your child can do to stay safe on the way to and from school. Also, make sure your child's school has updated and accurate contact information for you and others in case of an emergency.

Stay healthy.

The single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each year. October through December is the best time to get vaccinated. Free or low-cost vaccinations may be available through your doctor, nurse, job, health department, clinic, grocery store, or nursing home. Practice good health habits. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Wash your hands often with soap and water. Alcohol-based cleaners are also effective. Stay home if you get sick.

Be prepared for cold weather.

Exposure to cold temperatures, whether indoors or outdoors, can cause serious or life-threatening health problems. Infants and the elderly are particularly at risk, but anyone can be affected. Know how to prevent cold weather-related health problems and what to do if a cold-weather health emergency arises. Remember that using space heaters and fireplaces can increase the risk of household fires and carbon monoxide poisoning. Also, take time out to test and replace batteries in you smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Have a safe and healthy Halloween.

For many families, Halloween is a fun time to dress up in costumes, go trick-or-treating, and eat yummy treats. Halloween can also be an opportunity to provide nutritious snacks, get physical activity, and focus on safety. Make sure kids stay safe by wearing well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls. Trick-or-treaters should carry a flashlight to help them see and help others see them. Adults should examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before children eat them.

More Information
1-800-CDC-INFO
<http://www.cdc.gov/family>