Your mother was right! Health tips from mom



Do you ever wonder if some of the health advice your mom gave you growing up was actually correct?

On this Mother's Day, we credit those moms who really do know a thing or two about child health.

1- Give your child chicken soup when she is sick.
There is merit to chicken soup. Children need to drink extra fluids when they are sick. Fevers, coughs, diarrhea, vomiting, and infections all can contribute to dehydration. Chicken soup is a great tasting fluid, has electrolytes (salt), and the vegetables that you cook in it leak all of their vitamins into the soup. Basically this is homemade "smart water" heated up. An added bonus: the chicken gives kids protein they need to fight infection.

If your child does not like chicken soup, you can hydrate them with water, apple juice, or milk (yes, kids can drink milk even if they have a cough or a fever).

2-Wear your gloves.
Moms do know how to dress kids for cold weather. Gloves are important because fingertips are at risk for frostbite. So are noses, but you can't put gloves on that appendage.

3- Give honey for a cough.
We have written about this before- honey beats out placebo and even cough medicine in a few studies of parents' perception of children's sleep when sick with a cough. You can put it into tea, warm or cold milk, or give it straight off a spoon. Just be sure to brush their teeth afterward. And we remind you to NOT give honey to babies younger than one year of age because of concern for infant botulism.

4- Get some Vitamin D.
While we advise sunscreen for when your kids play outside, she is right that vitamin D , which comes from sun exposure and certain foods, is important. It not only contributes to bone health, but also modulates the immune system. Just focus on providing vitamin D-containing foods rather than tanning sessions.

5- Turn that music down. High frequency hearing loss is related to exposure to loud noises over time.

6- Take that out of your mouth!
"That" might refer to toys or a kids' own fingers. Babies and toddlers, of course, developmentally need to mouth objects as part of exploration, and some soothe their gums while teething as they chomp on their fingers or on large, non-chokable toys. Your job is constant supervision to prevent them from placing small chokable or toxic objects (button batteries) into their mouths. Unfortunately, older kids have been known to put necklace beads, coins, game pieces, and their own fingers in

their mouths. Some bite their nails or suck their thumbs. Your mom was right when she told you to “take that out of your mouth” in effort to avoid germ spread and to avoid choking.

7- Your nose is runny because it’s cold outside. While kids can’t catch a cold virus from cold temperatures, cold temperatures can cause a nose to run. This phenomenon, dubbed vasomotor rhinitis, occurs when the vessels in the nose dilate and cause congestion.

8-Take a nap.
Just like a little exercise goes a long way to improving health, a little nap can go a long way to restoring your energy level. Young kids tend to give up naps anywhere from 2 to 5 years old. If they are sleeping well overnight and are not sleepy during the day, they don’t need naps anymore. However, sometimes even after they give up nap time, kids fall behind on sleep: from illness, from a later bedtime due to a social event, or homework. A short nap can help them catch up on sleep and thus improve their mood and help their brains retain new knowledge. Just be aware that if you let your child nap for too long or too close to bedtime, they might have difficulty falling asleep that night which can put them in a vicious sleepy cycle.

Happy Mother’s Day – may you moms get a nice little nap today!

Julie Kardos, MD and Naline Lai, MD
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Mom, thanks for every “I told

you so”



Melanie with grandma and mom

Now that you are a mom, maybe, just maybe, you realize that your grandmother or mom was right after all. We asked our readers for some examples and our friend, writing coach Melanie Cutler, told us about two generations of advice she wishes she had heeded:

Grandma Helen ALWAYS had unsolicited advice for whoever would listen. She clipped out magazine articles and mailed them to her children and grandchildren. She was very well-read, and she knew a thing or two about most things nutrition and health-related. We found it annoying at the time, but looking back, she was right— and way ahead of her time in many respects.

About all of it.

Staying out of the sun, wearing sunscreen anyway, improving my posture, rinsing fruits and vegetables, and wait, did I mention staying out of the sun? She knew that you shouldn't eat the skin of the potato, but that the nutrients are right up against the skin, so you should nibble all the way to the skin. Likewise, she knew that the most nutritious part of the apple was the skin. That it isn't healthy to drink too much during meals because it interferes with digestion. She told me to hold in my tummy when I was just standing there because it was good exercise. Oh, how I wish I had listened….

I also wish I had obeyed when my mom, Joan, told me to stand up straight, put my backpack on both shoulders (despite the current fad), wear sunscreen, learn to play the harmonica, and worry less. She didn't dispense as much overt advice as her mother, Helen– probably because we were all duly hounded by Grandma ;-).

Although my back is a bit crooked and I am covered with freckles, it's never too late to heed their advice.

Maybe I'll take up the harmonica.

Mothers everywhere, thanks for every "I told you so" you've uttered. Keep giving us your advice, no matter how big we get and even if it doesn't seem like we are listening.

Julie Kardos, MD and Naline Lai, MD
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Contribute to our Two Peds Mother’s Day post!



Dr. Kardos, on a visit home from medical school, with her mom and grandmothers, 1991.

A flash of surprise spread across her face. “You mean my mother was right? I can’t believe it!” the mom in our office exclaimed.

Many times as we dispense pediatric advice, the parent in our office realizes that their own mother had already offered the same suggestions.

This Mother’s Day, we’re asking readers for anecdotes about times where maybe, just maybe, your mom or your grandmother was right after all. If you have a photo available of your mom or grandmother with your child that you don’t mind sharing as well, we would love to post them along with your anecdotes this Mother’s Day.

Please send them along to us at twopedsinapod@gmail.com before Mother’s Day weekend.

Naline Lai, MD and Julie Kardos, MD

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Mom “nose” best: Happy Mother’s Day 2016



This Mother’s Day, we honor Dr. Kardos’s mom, who passed earlier this year.

Dr. Kardos and I had been planning a post on nasal congestion in kids, but because we couldn’t have said it any better, we share a poem that Dr. Kardos’s mom wrote on this topic.

–Drs. Lai and Kardos

Runny Noses

My grandsons seem always to have runny noses;
They drip from their noses and land on their toeses;
One kid especially, his name is Aaron,
Will hug you so tight that what’s runnin’ you’re sharin’.

Alex will wipe with the back of his hand;
His runs in the house, on the beach, on the sand.
Jacob is older and he’ll use a tissue,
So his runny nose is not much of an issue.

In case they have colds, I hand each one a sweater,
But wearing a sweater does not make things better.
Allergic to dust? That’s the answer I’m seeking;
But while I keep dusting, their noses keep leaking.

They eat well and sleep well and play hard all day
In spite of their dripping that won’t go away.
So I’ve come to conclude, and I’m happy to say
That the noses of kids prob’ly just come that way.

by Felice Kardos (1943-2016)