

# Ask A Nurse Newsletter

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## What is the "Ask a Nurse" Program?

The ASK A NURSE program is staffed by University of Delaware nursing faculty and graduate and undergraduate nursing students.

Our mission is to provide health and wellness education and programs to children and families.

Reach us at [askanurse@udel.edu](mailto:askanurse@udel.edu)



## Sugar Wars

High Fructose corn syrup used to sweeten soft drinks is one of the reasons kids are overweight. Mice that drank fructose laced water ate less food and gained more weight. It is possible that fructose may affect metabolism in a way that favors fat storage.

Cut down on fructose consumption  
drink less soda and sweetened juices  
and eat foods that are not sweetened.

Eat a variety of foods. Apples and bananas are great as a winter snacks.

Get lots of exercise at least 20 minutes a day either indoors or out of doors.

Check out this website for healthy eating:

<http://www.keepkidshealthy.com/>

**YOU DEE says... Remember to wash your hands.**

## Winter Weather Dressing As the temperatures go down:

**Dress warm**

**Wear a hat**

**A scarf to cover face and mouth**

**Sleeves that are snug at the wrist**

**Mittens are warmer than gloves**

**Water resistant coat and boots in the rain and  
Several layers of loose fitting clothing.**

If you are out in cold for a long time  
recognize signs of Hypothermia

### Adults:

- shivering, exhaustion
- confusion, fumbling hands
- memory loss, slurred speech
- drowsiness

### Infants:

- bright red, cold skin
- very low energy

### What to Do

If you notice any of these signs, take the person's temperature. If it is below 95°, the situation is an emergency—get medical attention immediately.



## January is National Birth Defects Prevention Month

The March of Dimes has a wealth of information about prevention of birth defects. The following are some suggestions from their website:

<http://www.marchofdimes.com>

1. **Take a multivitamin containing 400 micrograms of folic acid daily prior to conception** to help reduce the chance of a birth defect of the brain or spine called neural tube defects. NTDs, such as spina bifida and anencephaly, occur in the first few weeks after conception, often before a woman knows she's pregnant.
2. **Stop smoking and avoid second hand smoke.** Smoking may make it harder to get pregnant and can increase the risk of premature birth.
3. **Stop using alcohol and illegal drugs.** They can cause lifelong health problems.
4. **Check with your doctor** before taking any medication, including herbal products.
5. **Maintain a healthy weight.** Being very overweight or underweight can increase the risk of prematurity and birth defects.
6. **Get a preconception checkup** and ask your doctor how you can help give a baby 9 months of pregnancy.
7. **Eat healthy** –reduce caffeine, avoid fish high in mercury, raw and undercooked meat and unpasteurized juice and dairy products.

About 150,000 babies are born annually with a birth defect. Some 20 percent of infant deaths are caused by birth defects, the National Center for Health Statistics estimates.



## WASH YOUR HANDS

The food and drug administration concluded that washing your hands with ordinary soap is better than using antibacterial soaps that tend to cost more. Antibacterial soaps do not protect people from infections and may encourage the development of bacteria resistant to medicine used to fight infection.



## School Bus Safety

- Arrive at the bus early
  - Wait in a safe place at least 5 giant steps from the traffic
  - Wait till the bus stops completely
  - Look both ways for traffic
  - Be sure your clothing does not get caught
  - Find a seat when you get on the bus
  - Keep the aisle clear of books and clothes
  - When you are close to your stop put any books or things away
  - Wait for the bus to stop before getting up
  - Good behavior is important to keep everyone safe.
- Other tips at <http://www.nsc.org/library/facts/schibus.htm>

