

# 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)



## National Poison Awareness Month

This year's national poison prevention week is March 19-25.

Check out the website for games to download and other information. Remember it is important to keep medicines and chemicals locked up and out of sight. The national toll free number is 1-800-222-1222.

<http://wwwtp://weatherww.poisonpreve:>  
[http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay\\_healthy/fit/work\\_it\\_out.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/fit/work_it_out.html)  
[nition.org/main.html](http://nition.org/main.html)



## Head Injury Alert

If your child suffers a concussion playing a contact sport, be careful that he or she does not return to competition too soon. A concussion is the temporary loss of normal brain function as a result of an injury. Repeated concussions can result in permanent injury to the brain. One of the most common reasons kids get concussions is through sports, so it's important to make sure they wear appropriate protective gear and don't continue to play if they've had a head injury. Under current guidelines, children who suffer a mild concussion with no loss of consciousness could be playing again in a week. But a recent University of Pittsburgh Medical Center study suggests that they may need more time off than that. Most of the athletes in the study had only mild concussions with no loss of consciousness, but required up to 10 days to fully recover neurologic and cognitive functioning. Watch for the following signs that indicate that he or she may have a concussion:

- seeing stars and feeling dazed, dizzy, or light-headed
- trouble remembering things, such as what happened directly before and after the injury occurred (this can happen even with mild concussions)
- nausea or vomiting
- headaches
- blurred vision and sensitivity to light
- slurred speech or saying things that don't make sense
- difficulty concentrating, thinking, or making decisions
- difficulty with coordination or balance (such as being unable to catch a ball or other easy tasks)
- feeling anxious or irritable for no apparent reason

## ***Did you know childhood obesity is a global problem?***

According to a new study nearly half the kids in North and South American could be overweight by 2010.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11694799/>

Spring is coming and it is a good time to think about outdoor activities. Exercise is cool is available at [http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay\\_healthy/fit/work\\_it\\_out.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/fit/work_it_out.html)

Exercise is fun and it is something we do all the time. It is jumping and playing and moving around. The more we move the better is for our health. The website has ideas for fun foods like ants on a log and frozen yogurt pops.



Sometimes it is fun to join a team other times it is not. Find an exercise that is right for your child. Think of team sports and individual fun like:

Basketball

Soccer

Baseball

Hiking

Dancing

Skating

For more ideas see:

[http://kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition\\_fit/fitness/hate\\_sports.htm](http://kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_fit/fitness/hate_sports.htm)

Although contact sports pose the highest risk of head injuries, the majority of cases are caused by bicycling and in-line skating injuries. You should, of course, make sure that your child wears a helmet while biking or skating, but if you suspect a concussion, call your child's health care provider for further keep in mind that it doesn't completely eliminate the risk of head injuries. Bike helmets are so important that the U.S. government has created safety standards for them. The helmet should have a sticker that says it meets standards set by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

Children who are eager to return to the playing field or to skating may insist that they are perfectly fine, but test results for reaction time, processing speed, cognitive ability and memory should be normal before they are cleared to participate. Athletes under 21 are particularly susceptible to "second impact syndrome," which occurs when the developing brain is subjected to a second injury too soon after the first has healed, resulting in brain damage or even death.

## **Safety for School Age and Adolescents**

CBS news reports that over the past two years inhalant abuse has increased by 18% among 8th graders and by 44 percent among 6<sup>th</sup> graders. This is important information for parents. Read the story at [www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/06/01/eveningnews/main620528.shtml](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/06/01/eveningnews/main620528.shtml)

More information is available at <http://www.inhalants.org/>

Inhalants are inexpensive and readily available. Teach your kids they can be dangerous and even deadly.

