



Parent Connection



HENRY FORD DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS

October 20, 2020

We know life may be challenging right now and we want you to know your Henry Ford pediatrician is still here for you. Below we have collected articles and resources we think you might find helpful. Information in our newsletters is yours to use when it is helpful to you and yours to disregard when it is not. We hope you and your family are staying safe during this pandemic.

FLU SHOT MYTHS

People who skip the flu shot often cite one of three reasons – all proven to be false.



The flu shot causes the flu.

The vaccine won't cause the flu, but you may experience a runny nose or mild fever as your body builds up antibodies against the virus.



I never get the flu.

Even if you don't have flu symptoms, you can still contract the virus and spread it to others.



I got vaccinated last year and still got the flu.

The flu virus mutates all the time, so it is possible to get infected with a strand not protected by the vaccine. However, flu shots do drastically reduce your risk and minimize how hard the flu will hit you if you do get sick.

Because many symptoms of the flu and COVID-19 are similar, getting the flu vaccine this year is more important than ever.

To make an appointment for your family's flu shots, go to henryford.com/flu



Open Scheduling for Flu Clinic

You can now self-schedule a flu shot for you and your family using Open Scheduling. Simply go to HenryFord.com and click on *Flu Shots* in the yellow banner at the top of the window for instructions.

If you prefer to schedule through MyChart, you can do that by:

- Clicking on *Schedule an Appointment*
- Select *Flu Shot Clinic*
- Follow the prompts

If you have specific questions about getting the flu shot or what type you or your family members may need, please contact your Henry Ford provider for guidance.

Wasp/Bee Stings

Fall is a great time for outdoor activities. During this outdoor fun, we may also notice an increase in wasps and bees. Bee and wasp stings are very different, as a bee leaves a stinger and a wasp does not. If your child gets stung by either, don't panic. If it's a bee, remove the stinger as soon as possible using tweezers or by swiping a credit card across the stinger. If a stinger cannot be found, watch the affected area for any reaction. [Henry Ford Health System outlines proper care](#) for bee and wasp stings. If you have concerns, contacting your child's pediatric office can get your questions answered.

Social Media Challenges

Social media allows us to stay connected to each other. It can be useful for sharing information with distant family and friends. It can also be used to spread dangerous and harmful information as well. One of the downfalls of social media is the online challenges that influence children to participate in dangerous activities. Challenges are typically posted by one individual. The video is then shared by multiple people. From this, others begin to record themselves participating in the initial challenge and thus, the challenge begins to spread across multiple social media platforms. In the past, these challenges have included eating laundry detergent pods or testing someone's pain tolerance by using salt and ice to burn the skin. Both of those activities, along with a variety of other very dangerous challenges, can cause permanent damage. Depending on how severe the damage is, it can even be life-threatening. Even with knowing and understanding that information, year after year, the challenges continue to appear.

Explaining the danger of these challenges to our children can be difficult. They may even be tempted to participate. [Understanding the appeal of these challenges](#) can help parents take the necessary steps in order to keep our children safe from their dangers.

Ableism

Ableism is a relatively new term. It refers to language, decisions about accommodations, and attitudes that discriminate against persons with disabilities. It focuses on what someone cannot do instead of what they can do. The [history of ableism](#) is tied to the assumption that being able bodied and neurotypical is superior and people not fitting that mold need to be fixed.

Some of the challenges with addressing ableism is a lack of awareness from able bodied and neurotypical people. When you do not have to regularly consider barriers for yourself or someone in your daily life, it is easy to overlook the variety of accommodations that different people need. But there are [steps](#) we can all take to raise our own awareness and make changes.

Social media now offers many of us a look into the daily lives of other people. Learning from others who are experiencing the effects of ableism can make the issue feel more real for those of us who do not see it on a regular basis. For some perspectives on how ableism can be harmful, take a look at these videos: Annie Elaine discusses how and why [Casual Ableist Language](#) is harmful; Purple Ella discusses her struggles with [internalized ableism](#) when managing her own disabilities; and Stella Young discusses why her [existence is not enough to be an inspiration](#) to others.

Alternatives to Traditional Halloween Activities

With the CDC [recommending avoiding trick-or-treating](#), a lot of families are looking for alternative Halloween activities. The American Academy of Pediatrics has [some suggestions](#) for safe Halloween activities including virtual costume contests (for some kids this will be a chance to show off a costume without a coat on!) and a spooky movie night. [Additional ideas](#) include a neighborhood pumpkin carving contest with online voting or finding drive-thru haunted forests and neighborhoods. Another fun idea that allows for walking around is a scavenger hunt. Whether you do one [inside your house](#) with clues or [in your neighborhood](#) with a list of items to find, providing a prize can take the sting out of not trick-or-treating. Baking (and eating!) [Halloween themed treats](#) can also help satisfy a denied sweet tooth.

If you do decide to trick-or-treat, do your best to follow safety precautions such as washing hands, wearing masks (Halloween masks do not provide enough protection; stick with your cloth mask) and practice social distancing. It is possible to have a fun Halloween while staying safe from COVID-19.

WHAT ABOUT TRICK-OR-TREATING?

- **Look for outdoor events.**
But avoid crowds, wear masks, & keep safe distances.
- Give out individual treat bags & if your child collects treats, wipe them down or let them sit a couple of days before opening.
- **Use cloth face coverings as part of a costume** (think Superhero)! Do **not** paint them, though. Paints may contain toxins.
- **And wash hands frequently!**

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Family Movie Night

As the weather is getting colder and we're spending more time indoors, one great family activity is Family Movie Night. During the day, have your kids craft homemade movie tickets and posters with that night's movie choice. For dinner, start off the evening with a family [Make Your Own Pizza Party](#). Once you've filled your bellies, [choose a movie](#) that everyone will enjoy. Movie Night is a good chance to check out [movies that celebrate diversity](#). If your family has a hard time agreeing on movies, let someone different choose each week.

Don't forget to get your snacks ready before the movie starts! You can go old school and make [stovetop popcorn](#). Another fun idea that gives great variety to movie night snacks is creating a [muffin tin snack tray](#). This is a great way to get kids to try new things and increase fruits and vegetables. Next, everyone should go "offline." No phones, tablets or computers during the movie; just like at the theater! Put pillows and blankets down and let the whole family get comfortable together. After the show is over, [use the movie to have a conversation](#) with your family. Discuss the positive and negative themes and allow the conversation to help you learn more about each other and reinforce your personal family values.

Symptoms of Concussion

Fall sports are in full swing. There are a few things that are important to look out for, like concussion symptoms, when participating in your favorite sport. [A concussion is](#) a type of mild brain injury that occurs when a blow to the head or an injury causes the brain to move back and forth with a lot of force. Concussions are most common in football, hockey, and soccer, but can occur in a wide range of sports. There can be a range of symptoms that occur, from mild to severe. Concussion symptoms include headache, blurred vision, nausea, dizziness, confusion, and slurred speech. Symptoms usually show up immediately, however in some cases it may take hours or days for symptoms to appear. There has also been ongoing research surrounding the length of time it takes an athlete to recover from a concussion. Originally it was believed that a concussion was a short-lived injury, however, studies show recovery can be a longer process. [This study by the Henry Ford](#) Center for Athletic Medicine found that recovery can take at least 30 days and often longer. If a concussion is suspected, do not hesitate to contact your pediatrician.

Children and Gender Diversity

The world can feel exclusive for individuals who identify as non-binary or transgender. For children, these feelings can impact them even more. Having supportive parents can help children better navigate and understand their gender identity. For parents, it's important to continue to [educate ourselves](#) so that we are available to [answer questions](#) and offer resources. Being informed about gender diversity, understanding language and terms, along with being an ally for your child, can make a huge difference in your child's confidence and ability to be comfortable with being true to who they are.

Has your child's behavior changed?

Have you noticed any changes in your child's behavior or emotions since the pandemic started? If you have any concerns or questions, please call (313) 451-0720. This is a Google Voice phone number that will call our Henry Ford coordinator who can help to connect you with a behavioral therapist for children.

Are there other topics you are interested in and would like to learn more about?

If yes, please e-mail us at ParentConnection@hfhs.org or to unsubscribe.