



Parent Connection



HENRY FORD DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS

September 7, 2021

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.

Celebrities, Influencers, and Content Creators: Do We Really Know Them?

With much of our socialization being online and the growing use of TikTok, it's important that we understand the true nature of the relationships we have with others on social media. This is especially true for our kids, [who are much more impressionable](#) to outside influences. [Parasocial relationships](#) are the most common type of relationship we have with people we see online and do not know in real life. These relationships are often one-sided with us, the recipient of content, being invested in someone who knows little to nothing about us. There is nothing inherently wrong with [these types of relationships](#), as long as we remain clear about the limitations. Celebrities, influencers, and content creators are sharing a curated version of their lives. One that they get to craft. Sometimes it's just one person working on their own, and sometimes it's a team of people making it look like a one-person operation. It is important that we make sure our children understand that the highlights these people share online are not necessarily a true indication of their life. No one should try to judge their own lives against these strangers, especially if it leaves them feeling less than or sad.

Once we understand the [benefits](#) of these relationships, because there are some, we can incorporate them into a wholistic approach to relationships. Talk with your kids. Make sure they understand the types of relationship they have with people. Knowing how to have [healthy relationships of all types is beneficial](#). Also, remember to share your own experiences with your children. How have parasocial relationships positively or negatively affected you? What did you learn and how can that knowledge benefit your kids?

FDA Approval: What Does It Mean?

Many people may have heard the exciting news that the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine was given full FDA approval for the prevention of COVID-19 in the age 16 and older population. This news may still generate questions surrounding the approval process. Facebook comment sections are generally not accurate information, so if you are receiving most of your information there, it can be difficult to understand the approval process. Over the course of the pandemic there have been many terms used, often things we haven't previously needed to discuss, such as "emergency use authorization" or "full FDA approval." [An emergency use authorization \(EUA\)](#) is a phrase that has been frequently used. Emergency use authorization is something the FDA uses in emergency situations, for example, a global pandemic. Even though an EUA for the vaccines was faster than a normal situation, no shortcuts in the clinical trials occurred. [The process could happen faster](#) because the science was already there, the funding was present, and volunteers were ready to enroll in the trials. [A full FDA](#)

[approval means](#) there is enough evidence and science to prove something is safe, effective in prevention, and the manufacturing process is correct.

Many things we use, such as vitamins, supplements, tobacco products, cosmetics, and essential oils are [not FDA approved](#), meaning they are not reviewed for safety and effectiveness. Even though the COVID-19 vaccine was just recently given a full FDA approval, the emergency use authorization it previously had still requires safety standards, effectiveness, and clinical trial requirements to be met, unlike many of the things we consume or use daily. If something has been given full FDA approval, you can feel confident that a rigorous process has been used to ensure the products safety.

Natural Immunity vs. Immunization

Medical providers know that vaccination is the only way out of the current pandemic. However, there are still many ongoing arguments regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. One conversation centers around whether natural immunity is better than immunization. To fully understand this argument, the [first step is understanding](#) what natural immunity means. When a virus enters the body, an antigen (what makes you sick) on the virus's surface is present. The body makes something called an antibody (what fights the virus), which attaches to the antigen that is already in the body. Once your body is exposed to a certain virus, memory cells are created. If you are exposed to that same virus again, memory cells help your body to make [antibodies](#) against it. This concept has been studied and looked at in viruses that have been around for many years. The problem with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes [COVID-19, is that it is a brand-new virus](#). This new virus is circulating in high amounts and mutating, causing different variants. New variants have changes or mutations to the spike protein portion of the virus. Some of these changes cause previously produced antibodies to be less effective at preventing infection. A person may develop immunity to the variant they were infected with, but once a new variant emerges, they do not have antibodies for that variant.

Another concern with natural immunity is that a person must become infected with the virus, [putting themselves at risk and continuing to spread the virus](#) to those around them. Protecting others and showing empathy can happen without experiencing something ourselves first. By now, we all know that mild or severe COVID-19 infection is possible, depending on the person. Becoming infected with COVID-19 is a gamble, one person may have a mild infection while another may need hospitalization, a ventilator and have lasting effects, including death. Immunization takes away the gamble. The COVID-19 vaccine prevents severe infection, hospitalization, and death. The vaccine provides assured protection and a greater number of antibodies from the virus. [The antibodies produced](#) by the vaccine better target the spike protein of the virus and targets more areas of the spike protein compared to natural infection. This will help if different variants emerge. A new [CDC study](#) shows that protection through vaccination appears to last longer than protection through natural immunity. Due to the amount of people becoming infected with COVID-19, it's only a matter of time before more deadly and contagious variants emerge. Getting yourself, and your children when eligible, vaccinated allows you to not take the risk of getting infected, infecting others, and possibly causing negative outcomes.

Back to Healthy Habits

Throughout the pandemic, many people have lapsed into some unhealthy habits around nutrition and physical activity. This includes [children](#). While it may seem like a good idea to focus on your child's weight to gauge change, for children it is better to [focus on their daily habits](#). Back to school time is a great time to make some changes to get your family on track with healthy habits. One easy way to get started is to use the concept of [5-2-1-0](#). These daily healthy habits provide a great foundation for helping kids incorporate nutrition and physical activity into their everyday activities. These [10 Healthy Habits for Back to School](#) can help provide some additional ideas for making changes to increase your family's healthy choices.

5 OR MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Top healthy cereal with berries, bananas and apples.
- Keep a bowl of fresh fruit on the counter.
- Cut fruits and vegetables into fun shapes.

2 HOURS OR LESS OF RECREATIONAL SCREEN TIME

- Turn off all electronics during meals.
- Place the TV and computer in a common, well-trafficked room.
- Choose educational content when watching TV.

1 HOUR OR MORE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Start with easy activities like a short family walk or bike ride after dinner.
- Dance classes are fun and healthy – even for kids.
- Join the local gym as a family.

0 SUGAR-ADDED DRINKS

- Fill water bottles from home and carry them with you during the day.
- Drink water or low-fat milk when you're thirsty.
- Keep a jug of cold water in the fridge at all times.

BETTER CHOICES COUNT!
5-2-1-0 IS THE WAY TO GO.

HENRY FORD HEALTHY EATING LIVEWELL

henryfordlivelwell.com/5210

Let's Get Healthy! and LGH-Teen

[Let's Get Healthy!](#) is a motivating, 12-week program that teaches children ages 9-13 and their families how to take simple steps toward understanding the importance of healthy eating habits and an active lifestyle. The LGH team is made up of a doctor or nurse, registered dietician, behavioral therapist, and personal trainer. By partnering each child with at least one parent or caregiver, the families and teaching team work together to reshape how each child and their family think about food, nutrition, and exercise.

We are also now offering an LGH Teen program for teens ages 14-18. This program builds on the foundational messages of LGH while also addressing the unique needs of teens. LGH-Teen participants are not required to have a parent present.

For the fall session, groups will meet virtually once a week. Programming includes a wide variety of topics including mindful eating, snack choices, staying motivated and body image. Classes will be fun, interactive and provide you a chance to learn and get answers to your healthy lifestyle questions from the comfort and safety of your own home. Each class will also have thirty minutes of live physical activity instruction.

For more information or to register, please call (313) 874-6653 or email us at LetsGetHealthy@hfhs.org. You can also register online [here](#).

Celebrating Hispanic Scientists

September 15 through October 15 is [National Hispanic Heritage Month](#). In honor of this month, we would like to highlight some contributions [Hispanic scientists have made to science](#). Would you be surprised to know that color TV and the artificial heart both come from [Latin American scientists](#)? There are [three Latina scientists](#) currently testing and monitoring SARS-CoV-2 and its variants. Currently Hispanic students are [underrepresented](#) in STEM fields. There are some groups trying to change this, like the [Latinas in STEM](#) and the [Hispanic Organization Corporate Responsibility](#).

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.