

Physical Activity:

Recommended amount of physical activity:

The World Health Organization, WHO, recommends the following:

- Children should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily. Such activities include: Walking, running, football, basketball, and cycling
- WHO also recommends the following activities:
 - ✓ Vigorous-intensity aerobic activities: Minimum of three days a week
 - ✓ Muscle-strengthening activities : Minimum of three days a week
 - ✓ Bone-strengthening activities: Minimum of three days a week

This may seem excessive; however, physical activity does not necessarily mean that exercising should be done only at the gym; it could also be incorporated in day-to-day household activities.

Guidance on Increasing Physical Activity in Children

The elimination of excess weight in children is one of the most complicated, but simple, things to do. This is because it is difficult to deal with the culture of those surrounding the child, or address a child's wishes and other psychological and environmental factors.

Protecting your child from obesity should be your top health priority. However, if your child becomes overweight or obese, you should interfere to change their lifestyle (nutrition and physical activity), while ensuring that this change is enjoyable for the child. Below are some guidance tips to help your child increase their physical activity:

A- Encourage your child to move:

In the past, It was common to see children moving and playing everywhere, but nowadays, it has become a rare occurrence. Below are some ideas for you to help your child return to being active:

- Playing active household games, such as: Chasing games, hide and seek, jump-rope, and others.

- Playing video games that require movement, such as: Wii and Kinect (motion simulator).
- Also, try walking around with your child and performing some activities together, such as: Walking, cycling, visiting parks, playing, and others.
- Involve your child in household chores, such as: Sweeping, taking out the trash, cleaning surfaces, mopping the floor, and others.
- Register your child in a sports club if possible.
- Set a specific physical activity goal (such as walking for 5 kilometers), and reward your child upon completion.

B- Set up screen time limits for your child:

The less time your child spends using electronic devices, the more physically active he will become. In addition, parents should take into consideration that their children imitate them and this is why the whole family should reduce the time spent using electronic devices. This can be achieved by:

- Limiting the time your child spends using electronic devices.
- Not allowing your child to watch TV while eating.
- Whenever you want to reward your child, the reward should preferably be a trip to a place of his own choosing, or an activity he loves to do, rather than rewarding him with additional screen time.

In-car Child Safety:

The importance of car seats for babies and children:

Road accidents cause the deaths of many children every year. Accidents have increased significantly since 2015 due to several reasons (such as distracted driving). Such accidents are difficult to prevent if the driver uses smart devices while driving. Meanwhile, even if you drive safely, this does not necessarily mean that other drivers do.

Having your child sit in a properly-installed car seat, that is appropriate for his age, in the back seat, would help protect your child,

and reduces the risk of suffering from serious injuries in road accidents; whose victims are mostly children.

Types of child car seats:

Car seat types vary depending on the child's age and weight, as well as the vehicle type. Car seat types include:

Appropriate car seat type	Age range	Weight
Rear-facing car seat for infants	Birth to 6-9 months	0-10 KG
	Birth to 12-15 months	0-13 KG
Convertible car seat	Birth to 4 years	0-18 KG
	Birth to 6 years	0-25 KG
Forward-facing car seat	9 months to 4 years	9-18 KG
	9 months to 11 years	9-36 KG
Booster seat	4-6 years	15-25 KG
	4-11 years	15-36 KG
Wedge pillow	6-11 years	22-36 KG
	4-11 years	15-36 KG

Guidance on choosing the right car seat for your child:

- There is no such thing as the "best" or "most efficient" seat. The type of each seat is bound by the age and size of the child, as well as proper installation and proper use.
- Seat's high price does not necessarily mean that it is the best.
- It is recommend that the seat filling is comfortable for your child's head, providing the necessary head support, especially when travelling.
- Make sure that the fabric of the seat absorbs moisture, and that this fabric is removable for cleaning purposes.
- Make sure that the car seat has a sunshade cover to protect your child from the sun.
- Make sure that the car seat is easy to remove and install into the stroller.

Child safety at Home:

Most common accidents:

- Playing with chemicals (medicines, detergents, cleaning products and others).
- Toy-related problems.
- Falling down.
- Burns.

Child safety at Home:

Home injuries and accidents can occur at any time; some of their causes are obvious and others may not be easily noticeable. Below are guidelines for you to prevent such accidents in each of the following places:

- **Kitchen:**
 - Keep your children away from the kitchen when cooking.
 - Keep the handles of pots and pans away from the outer side of the oven, and make sure that you use the internal cooking stoves rather than the ones near the outer side of the oven.
 - Keep hot food away from the reach of children, and do not leave it on the edges of table surfaces.
 - Keep sharp objects away from the reach of children, and place them in closed cabinets.
- **Bedroom:**
 - Make sure that the child's bed or crib is safe and that it has railings to prevent your child and falling on the ground while sleeping.
 - Avoid putting cotton toys near your sleeping child to prevent any accidental suffocation.
- **Bathrooms:**
 - Observe your child continuously when he is taking a bath. If you had to leave them, even to get a phone call, you must take him out of the shower with you.

- Make sure that the water temperature is suitable to avoid burns.
- Keep electrical devices (such as: Hair dryers) away from water, and make sure the devices are disconnected while the child is taking a bath.
- Make sure that all bathroom and laundry rooms are closed.
- **Electrical Safety:**
 - Cover unused electrical plugs with their own covers.
 - Place the wires inside their own insulation panels and keep them away from the path of children's strollers.
- **Chemicals (medicines, detergents, and others):**
 - Place all medicines, detergents and cosmetics in the upper shelves or in closed cabinets; children do not differentiate them from sweets.
- **Toys:**
 - Make sure to buy toys that are appropriate for the age range of your children.
 - Be careful when using toys with sharp edges or those consisting of small parts.
 - Always read the instructions that come with toys to learn about the age range for which such toys are manufactured, and learn more about ways to clean those toys.
 - Caution is necessary when children are playing with toys that consist of small parts that may lead to suffocation (like: small balls).
 - Keep children's toys away from newborns.
- **General Guidelines:**
 - Make sure to have a first aid kit in your home.
 - Make sure to keep the house doors locked to prevent children from going out to the street without supervision.
 - Make sure that your house windows are secured to protect your children from falling off.

- Keep furniture away from windows to prevent your children from climbing them and reaching the windows.
- Make sure to install safety gates at the top and bottom of the stairs.
- Keep plastic bags away from the reach of your children.
- Keep cigarettes away from the reach of your children.
- Keep weapons away from the reach of your children. If you have a gun inside your house, make sure that its magazine is empty and that the gun is well-hidden while bullets are kept somewhere away from the gun.
- Stay near your child when he is sitting on high seats and chairs.
- Keep your lighters and matches in high closets.



Children and Passive Smoking:

Effects of passive smoking on children:

Children are particularly susceptible to the effects of passive smoking, which include:

- Unexpected sudden death of infants (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).
- A child who lives in a family who smokes during the first 18 months of life has an increased risk of a range of respiratory diseases, including bronchitis, and pneumonia, and is more likely to catch colds, coughs and middle-ear infections.
- Asthma: A child who is exposed to smoke at home is more likely to develop asthma with exacerbated symptoms and increased incidence of asthma attacks. Such children also tend to need relevant medicines for a longer period of time.
- Cigarettes and ashes could lead to burns or eye injuries.
- Children who grow up with smoking parents or family members are three times more likely to start smoking.

Limiting the risks of passive smoking:

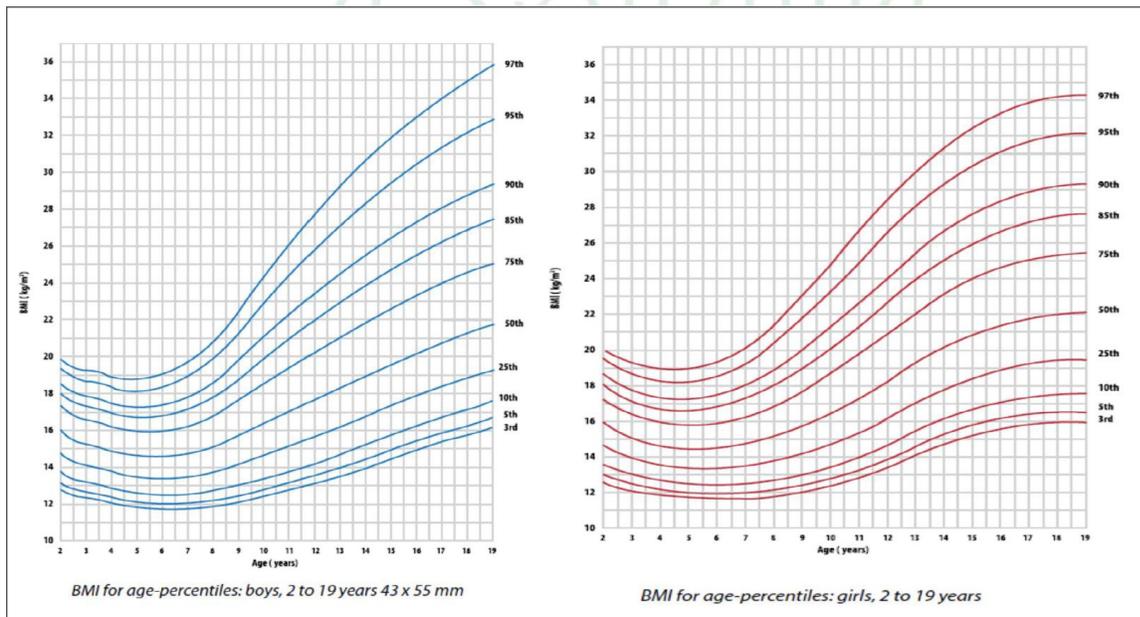
- Do not smoke inside the house.
- Do not smoke inside the car.
- Do not smoke inside the closed areas.
- Avoid taking your children to places crowded with smokers whether in outdoor or indoor (like coffee shops).
- Seek restaurants and places that prohibit smoking.
- Advise your children to stay away from smoking atmospheres.
- Make sure that your children's schools and daycare centers prohibit smoking.



Child Growth:

Stages of healthy child growth:

Healthy nutrition is what helps people develop and improve their overall health, which ensures efficient and effective daily activities.



Child weight management:

There are many ways to help your child lose weight without affecting his growth; as they are aimed at making sure the child's weight is suitable for his height.

Those ways include:

- Being mindful of the child's psychological state when dealing with his weight, and encouraging him to play and exercise.
- Engaging your child in an ongoing, preferably group, sports activity of average intensity.
- Ensuring that your child has high-fiber and low-sugar breakfast meals.
- Providing your child with options that are as healthy as possible (such as vegetables and fruits) while maintaining attractive presentation of them.
- Calculating the needed daily calorie intake and training students to monitor the nutritional value of their food.
- Dividing the child's daily meals to five small meals to be served on fixed time.
- Increasing whole-grains in your child's meals, such as: Oats, wheat grains, brown rice and chickpeas.
- Ensuring that your child drinks two cups of water before eating.
- Gradually reducing the amount of sugar added to your child's beverages.
- It is preferred to provide your child with low-fat dairy products.
- Making sure that your child's meal does not include more than one type of carbohydrates.
- Avoid having your child eat fruits or sweets right after eating their meals.
- Serving natural juices rich in fiber, and educating students about the dangers of soft drinks and energy drinks, as well as the need to refrain from them.
- Avoiding the use of terms like "diet".
- Making sure that those who surround your child follow the same healthy habits.

- Using healthy cooking tools (like electric fryers) to provide the child's favorite foods with the lowest calories.
- Allowing your child to eat whatever he desires once or twice a week. It is preferred that he eats such meals in the morning time.
- Measuring your child's weight on the weighing scale once every 10 days. It is preferred to find different exciting ways to encourage them to hop on the weighing scale.

Diseases that affect the growth of your child:

- Malnutrition.
- Genetic diseases.
- Hormonal disorders.
- Anemia.

The treatment of these diseases varies based on the case.

- **Malnutrition:**

This is the most common cause of growth problems in the world, and it occurs mainly because of lack of protein and other nutrients in the body.

- **Genetic diseases:**

Most common diseases that affect the growth of your child:

- Turner Syndrome.
- Down Syndrome.

- **Hormonal disorders:**

The endocrine glands are responsible for the secretion of hormones in the body, thus regulating the processes of the body, including growth.

Most common hormonal disorders that affect the growth of your child:

- Growth hormone deficiency:
Growth hormone is secreted from the pituitary gland located in the brain. Any deficiency in this hormone affects the growth of your child.

Treatment:

You may have your child injected with the growth hormone.

○ **Hypothyroidism:**

This is a disorder of the endocrine system in which the thyroid gland does not produce enough thyroid hormone, leading to slow growth or slow metabolism.

Treatment:

Your child may take thyroid hormone replacement tablets.

○ **Cushing's Syndrome:**

This occurs due to excessive secretion of cortisol and is characterized by the increasing weight of the child while the height does not.

● **Anemia:**

This is defined as the lack of hemoglobin in the blood, or the decreased size of the red blood cells compared to their normal size (for each age range).

Complications:

- Physical growth (weight or height) is delayed in comparison to standard growth curves.
- Weak immunity, and increased incidence of infections and diseases.
- Fainting or weak heart muscle.

Treatment:

Treatment is split into two parts: Avoiding bad habits and practices, and treating fungus if found, as well as ensuring that your child eats iron-rich foods.

Prevention:

- ❖ Prevention is mainly based on having healthy and balanced food. This includes:
 - Eating diversified well-balanced meals, which contain animal protein or various sources of vegetable protein.
 - Avoiding Vitamin A deficiency
 - Correcting bad habits and practices that reduce the absorption of iron, such as having iron with calcium, as well as replacing calcium with vitamin C sources to ensure iron absorption.
 - Adhering to a detection and screening schedule for early detection of diseases:
 - This schedule is used for babies at the age of 9-12-15-18 months, as well as children at the age of five. In the case of anemia, such cases are treated for three (3) months before re-testing the child. The test should be carried out periodically every three years.

Clinical Health Education Department

For further questions kindly contact us via email:

Hpromotion@moh.gov.sa