

September  
2022



# THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

AT SAINT PETER'S UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL  
A MEMBER OF SAINT PETER'S HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

*Safely treating you better...for life.*

## Tips for Returning Back to School Safely

Parents and children do a great deal to prepare for the return of school – checking those needed school supplies off the list, buying new clothes, and making sure they know the right bus stop. Most importantly, parents should be sure their children are ready to return to school healthy and learn ways to stay healthy during the school year. Because COVID-19 variants and other infectious diseases are still spreading, below are **five health tips** for children to go back to school safely.



### 1. Practice Proper Handwashing

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), proper hand washing removes germs from hands, protecting children from catching respiratory infections like pneumonia and COVID-19.

#### When Should We Wash Our Hands?

"Handwashing is a simple way to prevent the spread of diseases and it's important that everyone in the family sets a good example for children by practicing good hand hygiene," said Sabah Kalyoussef, DO, a physician in the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases at The Children's Hospital at Saint Peter's University Hospital.

Everyone should wash their hands:

- Before cooking or preparing a snack
- Before eating
- After using the bathroom
- After being outside
- After cleaning rooms or surfaces in the house
- After touching pets
- After blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing (always sneeze into your elbow or a tissue)

#### What's the Best Way to Wash Hands?



Wet hands with clean, running water that isn't too hot.



Apply soap. Use a foaming soap to make it more fun!



Lather up for 20 seconds; sing a song to keep your child engaged.



Wash in-between fingers, the backs of hands, under nails and on wrists.



Rinse off the soap with clean, running water.



Dry hands with a clean towel or paper towels.

### 2. Stay Up-to-Date on Vaccines

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the CDC recommend the COVID-19 vaccine for children between the ages of 6 months to 17 years old. Booster doses of the COVID-19 vaccine are recommended for everyone 5 years and older.

"The COVID-19 vaccine has been found to be safe and effective in children and teens. Speak with your child's pediatrician to determine if your child can get the COVID-19 vaccine and ask them about any concerns you may have," said Kristina Feja, MD, MPH, chief of the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases at The Children's Hospital at Saint Peter's.



The New Jersey school immunization requirements include DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and acellular Pertussis), Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV), MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella), Varicella (Chickenpox), Hepatitis B for children from kindergarten to the first grade, and Meningococcal and Tdap (Tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) for children in the sixth grade or higher. The CDC recommends the HPV (Human Papillomavirus) vaccine at age 11 or 12 to protect against cancers caused by HPV infection. Both boys and girls should get the HPV vaccine. These routine immunizations are very important, as low vaccination rates can cause resurgence of these diseases.

### 3. Wear a Mask

Wearing a mask is an effective strategy that helps to slow the spread of COVID-19, especially when indoors. The mask should be worn properly, covering the nose and chin. Disposable face masks should be changed daily or when visibly soiled, damp or damaged.

### 4. Pay Attention to Your Child's Mental Health

According to a report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, more children are experiencing mental health issues as a result of the pandemic, social isolation, economic stress and stresses over family members getting sick. Compared to six years ago, 38,000 more children in New Jersey are struggling with mental health issues. Check in with your child often to see how they are feeling about their schoolwork, friendships, family members and other aspects of their lives. Watch out for signs of anxiety and depression such as changes in sleep, eating or behavior. The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline offers 24/7 call, text and chat access to trained crisis counselors who can help parents of children who are experiencing a mental health crisis or any other kind of emotional distress.

### 5. Keep Your Child Home If They're Sick

If your child is sick with a fever or other symptoms, keep them home from school. By staying home from school, your child will be able to rest and recover from whatever illness they have. Staying home will also prevent their classmates from getting sick.

**To make an appointment with the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases, call 732.339.7841.**



# Back to School: Getting a Good Night's Rest

It can be difficult for children to adjust their sleep schedules once the school year begins. Sometimes all children need is proper sleep hygiene and a bedtime routine to get a good night's rest, but other times, medical issues can interrupt that routine. Samuel J. Knee, MD, chief of Pediatric Sleep Medicine at The Children's Hospital at Saint Peter's University Hospital and medical director of the Center for Sleep and Breathing Disorders at Saint Peter's University Hospital, says there are three common pediatric sleep disorders that parents may observe:



## Pediatric Obstructive Sleep Apnea

**Symptoms:** Pediatric obstructive sleep apnea occurs due to an obstruction or collapse of the upper airway during sleep, causing children to briefly stop breathing while sleeping. Children with obstructive sleep apnea may snore or wake up in the middle of the night gasping for air. The disruptions in breathing may occur multiple times throughout the night. This will make the child feel sleepy during the day. They may have trouble paying attention during school due to the lack of quality sleep.

**Treatment:** Pediatric obstructive sleep apnea is commonly caused by enlarged tonsils and adenoids. An evaluation by an Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) specialist, also known as an otolaryngologist, may be warranted to evaluate if the tonsils need to be removed. Obstructive sleep apnea may also be treated with weight loss, medications or a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machine that delivers a steady stream of air through a mask.

## Behavioral Insomnia of Childhood

**Symptoms:** Behavioral insomnia of childhood is when the child has trouble falling sleep or staying asleep due to the habits to which the child has become accustomed. Limit setting behavioral insomnia is characterized by protests and demands at bedtime—perhaps for an extra cup of water, one more hug, or one last bedtime story. Sleep onset behavioral insomnia is when an infant or child links falling asleep to an external stimulus, such as being rocked to bed, and will require this same activity to fall back to sleep if they wake up in the middle of the night.

**Treatment:** Behavioral modification is key. Parents should alter routines and behaviors that perpetuate childhood insomnia.

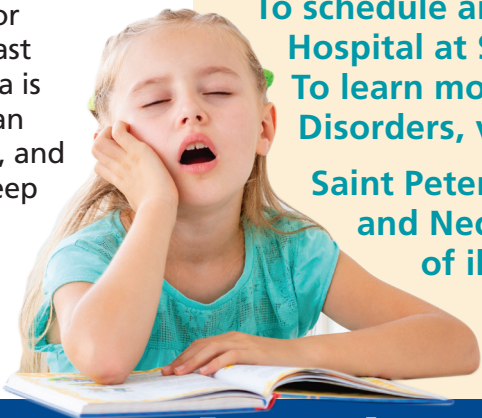
## Parasomnias

**Symptoms:** Parasomnia is another word for abnormal behaviors during sleep, such as night terrors and sleepwalking. Night terrors are events where children scream, sweat, and seem agitated during sleep. These events typically occur in toddlers. Unlike nightmares, children who experience a sleep terror will not immediately wake up or remember anything the next morning. Night terrors can occur with sleep walking.

**Treatment:** Night terrors and sleepwalking can be caused by sleep apnea or a poor sleep schedule. If these events are occurring frequently, you should be evaluated by a pediatrician or sleep specialist. It is important to ensure that children practice good sleep hygiene and keep a consistent sleep schedule, which may help prevent these events.

"Sleep is very important for overall health. During sleep we grow, our cells rejuvenate, and our memory consolidates," said Dr. Knee.

A consultation with a pediatric sleep specialist is the best way to diagnose and treat a sleep disorder in children. Depending on the symptoms, a pediatrician may recommend a sleep study where your child may need to undergo monitored sleep in a special lab. During the sleep study, a sleep technologist will monitor the child's brain activity, the heart's electrical activity, oxygen in the blood, movement of the chest and abdominal wall, muscle activity and the amount of air flowing through the child's nose and mouth.



To schedule an appointment with Dr. Knee at The Children's Hospital at Saint Peter's University Hospital, call 732.339.7910. To learn more about the Center for Sleep and Breathing Disorders, visit [saintpetershcs.com/sleep](https://saintpetershcs.com/sleep).

Saint Peter's Division of Ear, Nose and Throat and Head and Neck Surgery offers medical and surgical treatment of illnesses and ENT conditions such as pediatric obstructive sleep apnea. To schedule an appointment, call 732.745.8571.

# Community Calendar

For more information or to register for a program, call the contact number listed or visit [saintpetershcs.com/Events](https://saintpetershcs.com/Events). Most programs are **FREE** unless noted; please call for information.

## Cancer Support

**Bone Marrow Transplant**  
For patients who have had an allogeneic transplant  
Call for information: 732.235.8522

**Breast Cancer**  
Call for information: 732.235.7011

**Gynecologic Cancer**  
In partnership with the Cancer Support Community Central New Jersey  
Call for information: 732.235.6792

**Living with Cancer**  
Call for information: 732.235.7557

**Diabetes Education\***  
For information about classes, call the numbers listed below.

**Diabetes Self-Management Education**  
Call for information: 732.339.7630

**Gestational Diabetes Self-Management Education**  
Call for information: 732.339.7630

**Prevent T2 Program**  
Call for information and registration: 732.339.7772

Saint Peter's Pediatric Intensive Care Unit earned a Beacon Award for Excellence from the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses.

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## Parent Education

Parenting classes are currently being held online. Register at [saintpetershcs.com/Services/Parent-Education](https://saintpetershcs.com/Services/Parent-Education). Once registered for a class, access information will be provided to you. For information about the following classes, please call Parent Education at 732.745.8579

**Baby Care**  
**Birth Center Class**  
(for moms under midwifery care)  
**Breastfeeding Class**  
**Breastfeeding Support Group**  
**Grandparents Class**  
**Hypnobirthing**  
**Marvelous Multiples**

**New Daddy Class**  
**New Mom Support Group**  
**Prenatal Yoga & Exercise Class**  
**Prepared Childbirth/Lamaze Classes**  
**Sibling Class**  
**Spinning Babies**

**COVID-19**

**Moderna and Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccines**

Available at Saint Peter's University Hospital and Saint Peter's Family Health Center

[saintpetershcs.com/covidvaccine](https://saintpetershcs.com/covidvaccine)

## Support Groups

**Bariatric Nutrition Support Group**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month  
Next meeting: September 8 • 6 – 7 pm  
Call 732.339.7450 for Zoom meeting information

**Bereavement**  
Call Pastoral Care for information: 732.745.8565

**Craniofacial Teen Girls**  
Call for information: 732.745.8600, x8113

**MyGoal Autism Family**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month  
Next meeting: September 11 • 3 pm  
Call 877.886.9462 or email [info@mygoalautism.org](mailto:info@mygoalautism.org) for virtual meeting details

**SHARE**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month  
Next meeting: September 15 • 7 – 9 pm  
Call 732.745.8522 or email [imariano@saintpetersuh.com](mailto:imariano@saintpetersuh.com) for Zoom link

**Spouse/Partner Caregiver**  
Call for information: 732.745.8600, x8653

**Weight Loss Seminars**  
4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month  
Next meetings: September 27  
English 4 – 5 pm • Spanish 5 – 6 pm  
For information call 732.745.8555



**Need a doctor? To find a Saint Peter's physician, visit [saintpetershcs.com/findaphysician](https://saintpetershcs.com/findaphysician). Online scheduling is also available with select Saint Peter's Healthcare System physicians via Zocdoc at [BookMySPDoc.com](https://BookMySPDoc.com)**  
This calendar is for information only. Do not rely on it to make healthcare decisions on your own; instead, talk with your healthcare provider for advice and treatment. Do not ignore medical advice or delay seeking it because of something you read here. We do not suggest or endorse that you have any tests, use products, or use other information in this document without advice from your healthcare provider.

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254 Easton Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
732.745.8600 | 800.269.7508 | [saintpetershcs.com](https://saintpetershcs.com)

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