

[IMAGE]

## **Five Things You Need To Know To Keep Your Child Healthy**

By Julie T. Chen, MD

Parents in my clinic are always asking about how to keep their children healthy. I am a fundamentalist by nature in the sense that I think the day to day little things affect their health the most.

In my opinion, the top three main aspects that I think may impact a child's health are the following:

1. Nutrition: food is the foundation of health and cellular function. Rates of childhood obesity are high. Healthy non-processed foods should be a top priority for parents. Nowadays, there are so many pre-prepared food options that are made from whole natural unprocessed foods that even if you have no time to cook, try checking out the grocery stores around you...you just might be surprised.
2. Exercise and activities: instilling exercise and movement into a child's daily repertoire is essential to their long term health. Children who do not grow up thinking that they should be active daily, may have a harder time being active later on. So, encourage your kids to go out and run around with friends or be active at school or even doing exercise DVDs at home with you. The point is that children need to learn that being active on most days of the week should be a norm and not a rarity.
3. Chemical exposures: cleaning supplies and toxins in the home and in our foods can significantly impact our children. I would strongly recommend using organic cleaning supplies in areas where your children regularly occupy. I would also suggest organic foods if it's financially possible. Chemicals in vaccines and any concerns about that need to be addressed with your pediatrician but typically, the concerns can be reasonably addressed once you get the dialogue going with your doctor.

kid in snow - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark When it comes down to it, these factors can significantly impact your children's health. But ultimately, your relationship with your children are equally, if not, more importantly a factor of their health.

So, in regards to these 3 factors, maybe using them as ways to spend time with your children is even a better idea. Having them help you shop for healthy foods and cooking with them or going biking with them or exercising with them or doing house chores with them with organic cleaning supplies would be a good way to spend quality time with your children.

Because no matter what they eat or are exposed to, what healthy children all have in common are parents who are able to spend time with them and guide them and help them learn the limitations of what's right and wrong.

So, since you are reading this article, my guess is that you are already one of those great parents who care about their children and spending time with them daily to help guide them is something you are already doing. In that case, I think your children are lucky to have you and your children will be fine as long as you keep on doing what you're doing.

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**Dr. Julie T. Chen** is board-certified in internal medicine and fellowship-trained and board-certified in integrative medicine. She has her own medical practice in San Jose, Calif. She is the medical director of corporation wellness at several Silicon Valley-based corporations, is on several medical expert panels of Web sites and nonprofit organizations, is a recurring monthly columnist for several national magazines, and has been featured in radio, newspaper, and magazine interviews. She incorporates various healing modalities into her practice including, but is not limited to, medical acupuncture, Chinese scalp acupuncture, clinical hypnotherapy, strain-counterstrain osteopathic manipulations, and biofeedback. To learn more, visit [www.makinghealthyez.com](http://www.makinghealthyez.com).

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