an exercise boost may help kids’ hearts

There’s no doubt that any type of exercise is good for kids. But a recent study found that children and teens who replace light exercise with short intervals of vigorous exercise each day may reduce their risk for heart disease and diabetes.

The study examined data from more than 11,500 kids between ages 4 and 18. It found that those who boosted light exercise with more strenuous activity for at least 10 minutes a day had lower insulin levels and smaller waist sizes.

This study suggests that short intervals of vigorous exercise may benefit all kids, but especially those with high insulin levels or large waist sizes. You can help by encouraging your kids to boost their volume of exercise for a few minutes every day.

VIGOROUS EXERCISE 10 MINUTES A DAY

HEALTH INFO AT YOUR CONVENIENCE
For more tips on keeping the whole family healthy, check out our online health library at healthlibrary.lomalindahealth.org.

protect your football player

The risk for head injuries in high school, college and pro football players has received a lot of attention in recent years. But hits to the head are an issue for younger players, too.

The results of one recent study suggest that as kids grow older and bigger, the head impacts get stronger. The study looked at the largest pool of head impact data ever collected in youth football players.

If you’re a football parent, take precautions to help keep your player safe. Make sure your child’s helmet fits well and is in good shape. Look for a coach who limits contact during practices and teaches players to avoid dangerous actions. Know how to recognize signs of concussion, which include acting dazed or confused, forgetting plays, moving clumsily, answering questions slowly and passing out, even briefly. If these signs occur, seek medical help right away.

SPECIALIZED CARE FOR KIDS
Our physician experts include pediatric neurologists who can assist with traumatic brain injuries. For general questions or appointments, please call 909-835-1810.

caterpillar kabobs

Did you know that crawling caterpillars turn into beautiful butterflies? You can make your own caterpillars that won’t fly away and are fun to eat!

Ask an adult to cut up pieces of your favorite fruits. Melons, apples, oranges, pears and pineapple work well. So do whole grapes. Push the pieces of fruit onto skewers for a colorful fruit kabob. If you like veggies, you can use bites of zucchini, cucumber, squash, bell peppers or tomatoes instead.
get moving!
MAKE TIME FOR EXERCISE

If you think your kids’ busy schedules don’t have room for exercise, think again. Sneak fitness into their day with “microbursts” of activity. These short sessions add up, making for stronger hearts, healthier bodies and happier kids. Here’s how to get started.

1. SCREEN TIME
   During TV commercial breaks, kids can do jumping jacks, squats, push-ups or sit-ups — whatever gets them moving.

2. REVVED-UP CLEANUP
   Have your kids pick up and put things away as fast as they can (but carefully). Set a timer for five minutes and see how much they can get done in that time.

3. GETTING AROUND
   Instead of driving kids to school or to a friend’s house, have them walk or bike sometimes.

4. TOGETHERNESS
   In the evening, take a walk around the block as a family. It’s not just healthy — it’s a great way to catch up with your kids.

MAKE TIME FOR PLAYTIME
Loma Linda University’s Drayson Center offers programs to keep kids active and healthy. Visit drayson.llu.edu for information or to register.
Children who eat well from the start of their lives are more likely to continue eating well as they grow. But many young children aren’t being exposed to the foods that will set them on a healthy path — especially fruits and vegetables.

Is your child’s diet meeting expert recommendations? If not, you can get back on course.

**BAD NEWS ABOUT KIDS’ DIETS**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that infants be breastfed until they’re 6 months old. After that, veggies or fruit should be a part of every meal and snack.

Unfortunately, many parents don’t seem to be following those guidelines. One recent study that looked at results from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey found that only a little more than one-third of babies ages 0 to 5 months received breast milk.

The same study found that nearly one out of five kids ages 6 to 23 months ate no fruits or vegetables at all during the survey period. Those kids who did consume veggies were three times more likely to have french fries than healthier vegetables, such as broccoli or green beans.

**CREATING HEALTHY EATERS**

Parents shouldn’t get discouraged if their babies don’t immediately go for a new food, the AAP says. It can take 10 to 15 tries before children accept something new. Wait until at least age 6 months before introducing solid foods and expose your baby to a wide variety of foods, especially fruits and vegetables.

To keep healthy habits going as your child grows, serve — and eat — fruits and veggies at every meal and snack. Here are a few ways to sneak more produce into your day:

**GET COOKING!**

Each episode of our online cooking show, *Live It in the Kitchen*, demonstrates easy, healthy meals in less than a minute. Watch at bit.ly/2CvOIf2.
Often, illnesses such as bronchitis, sinus infections and ear infections get better without treatment. However, research shows that many parents are hesitant to wait to give an antibiotic. Communicating openly with your health care provider about antibiotics can help you better understand when they’re necessary and when they’re not. Here are three important questions that can help guide your conversation.

1. **Why should I wait to give an antibiotic?**
   Many infections improve on their own. Waiting two to three days after your doctor diagnoses an infection gives you time to see whether this will happen. If it gets better, you’ll avoid giving your child unnecessary antibiotics. This is a good thing. While antibiotics can be helpful when they’re needed, there are major risks to taking them. These include:
   - Allergic reactions
   - Severe diarrhea
   - Increased chance of antibiotic-resistant infection

2. **What can I do in the meantime to help my child feel better?**
   Your child may not need an antibiotic, but there are still things you can do to help your child feel better. For example, ask your doctor which over-the-counter pain reliever may work best. Find out what dose to give your child and how often you should administer it. If your child has an ear infection, holding a warm, damp cloth over the painful ear may help. In case of bronchitis, using a humidifier or breathing in steam from a hot shower may offer some relief.

3. **How will I know whether my child needs an antibiotic?**
   If, after two to three days, your child’s symptoms don’t improve or they get worse, then an antibiotic may be necessary. Ask your doctor exactly what to watch for and how to know when to call.

**3 Questions to Ask About Antibiotics**

Fever. Fussiness. Tugging at the ears. Many parents can easily ID the telltale signs that their child has an ear infection. All you have to do is call the pediatrician for an antibiotic, and your kid will soon be on the road to recovery, right? Not exactly.

**WHEN YOU CAN’T WAIT IT OUT**

If your child has an illness or other medical nonemergency that requires immediate attention, our Pediatric Express Care clinic can help. Find out more at lluch.org/our-services/pediatric-express-care or by calling 909-558-2828.
Kevin Balli, M.D., FACOG, was selected to chair the Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics by the Loma Linda University Board of Trustees in December 2017.

Dr. Balli graduated from the School of Medicine in 1998, after completing his undergraduate studies in mechanical engineering, at Walla Walla College in Washington. He conducted his residency at Loma Linda University and has been an assistant professor of gynecology and obstetrics since 2002.

RECOGNIZED MENTORSHIP
In 2010, Dr. Balli was named teacher of the year for “Promoting Excellence in Medical Education,” by the Walter E. Macpherson Society, and in 2007, he received the Whole Person Care Award from the Loma Linda University Medical Center. His skill and compassion as a mentor have been recognized nationally by the Council on Resident Education in Obstetrics and Gynecology, which honored him for “Excellence in Resident Education” in 2004, 2005, 2007 and 2008.

COMMITMENT TO OUR MISSION
“Loma Linda University has been my home since 1994, when I began my medical education, and I have been shaped and inspired by its mission over the last 23 years,” Dr. Balli said following his appointment. “So many mornings, as I walk from the parking lot, I have thought to myself how lucky I am to do what I do, and what a privilege it is to help people every day as a career.”

Dr. Balli’s selfless service and commitment to Loma Linda University Health’s mission are evident in the way he practices medicine. His guidance has been invaluable to our students and residents and will continue to be in the future.

“We live in a time of unparalleled change and unequaled need in health care. Leadership requires a closer partnership than ever before with our colleagues and our hospital administration,” he said. “As I step into this new role, I am blessed to be surrounded by some of the best physicians I have ever met. The doctors in the OB-GYN department at LLU are second to none, and I am so proud to be working with them to improve the health of our patients. Together we can do great things! I know God will continue to lead as we move forward.”

Please join us in supporting and congratulating him as he begins this leadership journey.

THE BEST CHOICE FOR MOMS-TO-BE
When you choose our Total Care Birth Center, you will receive safe and personalized care, including 24/7 access to a board certified obstetrician. Plus, we offer educational classes and physical fitness programs to prepare you for the birth of your baby. Learn more about our OB-GYN and other women’s services by calling 888-97-WOMEN (96636).
SPRAINS

**SITUATION:** Your child falls, gets hit on or twists the knee, wrist, elbow or ankle.

**SYMPTOMS:** He or she may feel a pop or tear when the sprain — an injury to a ligament that connects and stabilizes joints — occurs. Pain, swelling and bruising often develop afterward.

**SMART START:** Use the RICE method — Rest, Ice, Compression with an elastic bandage and Elevation.

**SIGNS TO BEWARE:** If the swelling and pain are intense, if the joint is locked or unstable, or if your child can’t bear weight, take your child to the emergency department.

STRAINS

**SITUATION:** Your child twists, pulls or overstresses a muscle, such as when throwing a pitch or kicking a soccer ball.

**SYMPTOMS:** Strains are stretches or tears in muscles or tendons, which connect muscles to bones. They cause pain, limited motion, swelling, cramping and muscle weakness.

**SMART START:** Reduce swelling and pain with ice and rest.

**SIGNS TO BEWARE:** If your child has pain in the neck or back, if numbness or weakness runs down an arm or leg or if there are changes in skin color, see a doctor.

SHIN SPLINTS

**SITUATION:** Your young runner or dancer repeatedly stresses his or her legs by increasing the time spent training.

**SYMPTOMS:** Shin splints occur when muscles, tendons or the thin layer of tissue covering the shinbone become swollen and inflamed over time. Pain strikes the front lower leg.

**SMART START:** Encourage two to four weeks of rest, followed by a gradual return to activity.

**SIGNS TO BEWARE:** If your child’s pain doesn’t subside after some time off, call a doctor. This could be a sign of a stress fracture, a small crack in the bone that often requires crutches to heal.

You can’t prevent every bump, scrape or bruise during childhood. But you can help reduce your child’s risk for sports injuries, such as sprains, strains and shin splints.

**Here’s how:** Make sure your young athlete warms up properly before any game or practice and cools down after. Eating a healthy diet and staying in shape can also keep growing bones, joints and muscles safe. When injury does strike, use this guide to know what to do. Fast treatment helps children return to the activities they enjoy.

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**KEEPING KIDS SAFE**

Safe Kids Inland Empire strives to reduce accidental injuries to children. For more sports safety tips or information on scheduling a safety presentation, visit lluch.org/about-us/safe-kids or call 909-558-8118.
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