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9-12 year Well Child Exam

WEIGHT: _____ LBS. _____ %

LENGTH: _____ IN. _____ %

DEVELOPMENT:

This is the age commonly known as pre-adolescence. Children typically have an increased rate of growth, both physically and emotionally. They are often very social and friends' opinions are highly valued. They may choose to give more value to information gained from friends than from their parents and family. Self-esteem and self-confidence are critical factors during this time period. Be sure to remember to praise your child for their achievements and help find ways to accentuate their strengths. Your child can be very helpful and should have more responsibility around the household including set chores and personal responsibility for their rooms and personal belongings.

PUBERTY:

Girls usually start between 8-13 years of age. Boys often start 10-14 years of age.

This is a good age to begin an open line of communication regarding the changes that your child can expect to experience. While many schools often have classes that discuss this issue, it is important to have a loving, trusting adult that the child can go to discuss any questions or concerns that may arise. Think about getting a book or looking on a website. Go over it together so that you can be there to interpret and advise. Remember, children may receive a lot of unintentional "false" or misleading information from friends and social media. It is important that they have a trusted person in their orbit who will give them true, HONEST INFORMATION about the changes they will experience in the next several years.

Good Books:

Girls: American Girl: The Care and Keeping of You
The "What's Happening to My Body" Book for Girls

Boys: What's Going On Down There: Answers to Questions Boys Find Hard to Ask
The "What's Happening to My Body" Book for Boys

Both: Caring for Your Teenager: A Complete and Authoritative Guide

Website: www.healthychildren.org

FITNESS:

Encourage routine physical activity both to enhance a healthy lifestyle and to have fun. Sports such as cycling, swimming, basketball, soccer, dancing, aerobics, cross country skiing, and brisk walking are great for cardiovascular health. Aim for at least 30 minutes of continuous exercise at least 3 times per week. Stretching and warming up to prevent injury and promote flexibility are important too.

NUTRITION:

Children often will gain 4-7 pounds per year, but if your child does not match up with this trend, don't worry. There is often great variability in a pre-teen's appetite. Be sure to be aware of what your child is eating on a regular basis. Your child's eating habits now can impact his/her health later, as studies show eating habits established by fourth grade will dominate eating patterns for our entire lives. Enjoy cooking low calorie meals together as a family. Cut back on wasted calories such as sugary drinks (sodas, Gatorade, juices) and encourage healthier food choices, like grapes, apples, celery sticks or carrots (dipped in low fat ranch dressing for fun flavor). Remember, if a snack comes from a wrapper or a box, it is likely not a good snack food choice. Offer less starchy carbohydrates, such as whole grain bread, whole grain pasta, and brown rice. Serving sizes of meals should approximate the size of an average fist. Enjoy family meal time together to get caught up on your pre-teen's day.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

This is a unique area of experience which many parents may not have had during their early adolescence but is certainly a part of the lives of their children. Be active in discussing with your children the challenges of social media. Cyberbullying, internet pornography, online chat rooms with unfamiliar participants are all available at the touch of a button.

IMMUNIZATIONS:

11 years: Meningococcal vaccine (Menveo), Tdap & HPV vaccine (Gardasil)

12+ years: HPV vaccine (Gardasil) – this is a booster dose

LABS:

Your child should have at least one cholesterol and one hemoglobin level during this time period, usually at the 11- or 12-year exam. Inform your doctor if you have a family history of heart disease, hypertension, or high cholesterol.

NEXT VISIT:

We recommend seeing your child every year for a physical exam to assess for normal physical, emotional, and social growth.