

## Back To School Safety

Written by Dr. Niru Prasad, M.D.

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During the early fall season of the year, millions of childrens throughout the united states start their school year. Pediatrician's are busy in their offices doing school and sports' physicals including the immunization status of their children while parents are busy at home doing their back to school shopping. Most of the kids are excited to going back to school so they can reunite with their friends and get involved with sports activity. However, it is a new adjustment for childrens entering kindergarten.

Here are a few safety tips i have prepared for our parents and children so the school year is enjoyable.

1. Immunizations and school physicals - It is very important for every child to have school physicals, complete immunizations, vision and hearing check, documentation of allergies, dental check ups and sports physicals before the school starts..
2. Safety guidelines to follow when your child walks to the bus stop or rides bus to school - Be careful while crossing the road. Follow the road signal and look at both sides for traffic while crossing the road.
3. Dress appropriately for weather - Wear light, loose and layered clothes
4. While riding bike always wear helmet and follow bike trail. According to the national highway traffic safety administration in Washington DC, the school buses are very safe and well equipped.

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5. While riding the bus do not cross the road unless bus is fully stopped, green light is on and driver has signalled that it is ok to walk to the bus.

### Nutrition

In order for children to have a good school performance, much emphasis should be placed on a well balanced diet supplemented with vitamins and iron. Eating a good breakfast will jump start your child's day and improve their concentration and school performance. A good breakfast consists of cereal, eggs, fruits and orange juice. There has been lots of changes in school lunch program so it is always important for the parents to be in close contact with their school administrations as well as school health nurses. Please do discuss regarding your children's allergies so they will be prepared for any emergency if it arises.

The dinner menu for a growing child should include servings from meat, fruits, vegetables and milk. Children should be taught to brush their teeth, finish their homework and sleep early so they get plenty of rest before next day begins.

Children ages 5 to 6 yrs of age who are ready to start kindergarten should be able to perform the following:

A. They should be fully toilet trained. B. Be able to speak freely with other children and teachers. C. Be able to say their name, address if lost. D.

Willingly engage with school activity.

E.

Listen quietly while being read to.

F.

Be able to be away from parents for several hours.

Encourage your children to develop life long reading habits.

Praise your child that he or she is growing up and able to handle school. Show your child's enthusiasm for learning and new experiences.

Make sure your child understands the pleasures and practical values of being able to read and write.

Encourage them to respect their teacher and follow school rules and guidelines.

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and follow home rules such as washing hands before dinner, clean up their mess afterwards and brush teeth before sleep.

In summary by following these simple guide lines our children will have a very pleasant and successful school year.