



THE HSC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
Health Services for Children
with Special Needs, Inc.

HEALTH Connection

SUMMER
2019

HSCN's Newsletter for Families with Children and Young Adults with Special Health Care Needs

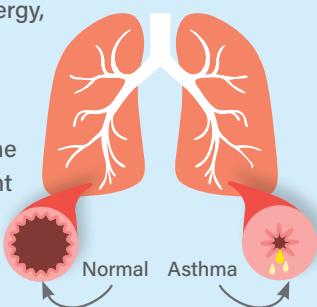
Visit us online at hschealth.org/health-plan

Help Your Child Manage Asthma

As a proud parent, you want your child to succeed at everything—including asthma management.

When you have asthma, your airways become swollen. Airways are the passages that allow air to come in and out of the lungs. They are sensitive to certain things around them, like dust or animal hair.

These are called triggers. Asthma triggers make airways swell even more. When your airways swell, this causes a flare-up. A flare-up is when it is harder to get air in and out of your lungs. The American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology stresses that asthma medicine can help prevent flare-ups.



There are two types of asthma medications that your child can take. One helps to prevent asthma attacks. The other is for relief during flair-ups.

1. Controller medicines.

You take these daily to prevent asthma attacks. Examples:

- Anticholinergic inhalers.
- Corticosteroid inhalers.
- Corticosteroid/long-acting beta agonist (LABA) combination inhalers.
- Leukotriene modifier pills or granules.

2. Quick-relief, or rescue, medicines.

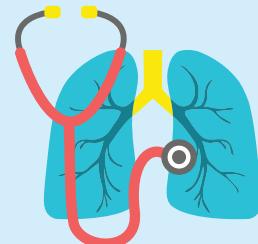
Take these for fast relief during a flare-up. Examples:

- Short-acting beta agonists inhalers
- Corticosteroid tablets



When asthma is well-controlled, your child will be able to:

- Feel better with fewer symptoms.
- Enjoy an active life.
- Sleep without being disturbed by asthma.



Talk with your child's doctor about how you can help your child reach these goals.

Warm Weather Asthma Tips

Warm, sunny days and outdoor play are a natural mix. Some substances in outdoor air may worsen asthma symptoms. Be alert for common

asthma triggers, such as pollen. Air pollution can also irritate the lungs.

Check the pollen counts in your area. Try to limit or avoid outdoor activities when levels are high. For example, you

can shoot baskets or swim indoors. If you do head outside, wash your hands as soon as you go back inside. You might also want to bathe or change your clothes to reduce allergens in your home.



Video Game Addiction: Is It a Real Thing?

It is easy to get caught up in a video game. But can too much lead to addiction? The World Health Organization says yes.

Addiction is when the body or mind badly wants or needs something in order to work right. So far, gaming addiction isn't listed as a formal mental health diagnosis in the U.S. But it is an active area of research.

"JUST ONE MORE LEVEL, AND THEN I'LL STOP"

How can you tell if you or someone you love has crossed the line? Gaming may be a problem if you see these signs:

- It becomes the center of the person's life.
- The person feels cranky, anxious, or sad when unable to play video games.
- The person spends more and more time playing video games.
- The person tries to cut back but can't.
- The person is gaming instead of doing other activities he or she once enjoyed.
- The person hides from loved ones how much time he or she spends gaming.

- The person uses gaming as an escape from bad feelings.
- The person risks his or her relationships or job for gaming.

GETTING HELP

FOR OUT-OF-CONTROL GAMING

If you recognize these signs in yourself or a loved one, reach out for help. Talk with your health care provider or a mental health professional.

One treatment often used is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). In CBT, you learn skills that can help you recognize and stop addictive behaviors. Therapists talk with people one at a time or in groups to see how thought patterns affect their feelings and behavior. Then they work to change negative thought patterns into more positive ones.

Depression Screenings for New Moms and Moms-to-Be

Many pregnant women and new mothers feel sadness and anxiety. Sometimes this can be a sign of depression. Untreated, perinatal depression can harm women and their children. Perinatal depression is an emotional disorder that affects women before and after childbirth. This is due to many factors including rising hormone levels.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force advises pregnant women and new moms to have a depression screening.

At that time, doctors ask a series of questions so they can provide you the best treatment. It is important to give true answers. This helps women get the help they need. Treatment may include talk therapy and prescription medicine. Your doctor will work with you to make a plan that meets your and your baby's needs.



Is Your Child Getting Enough Sleep?

What kids do during the night has a huge impact on their daily lives. Sleep plays a key role in mental, physical, and emotional health at all ages. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine advises the following daily totals:

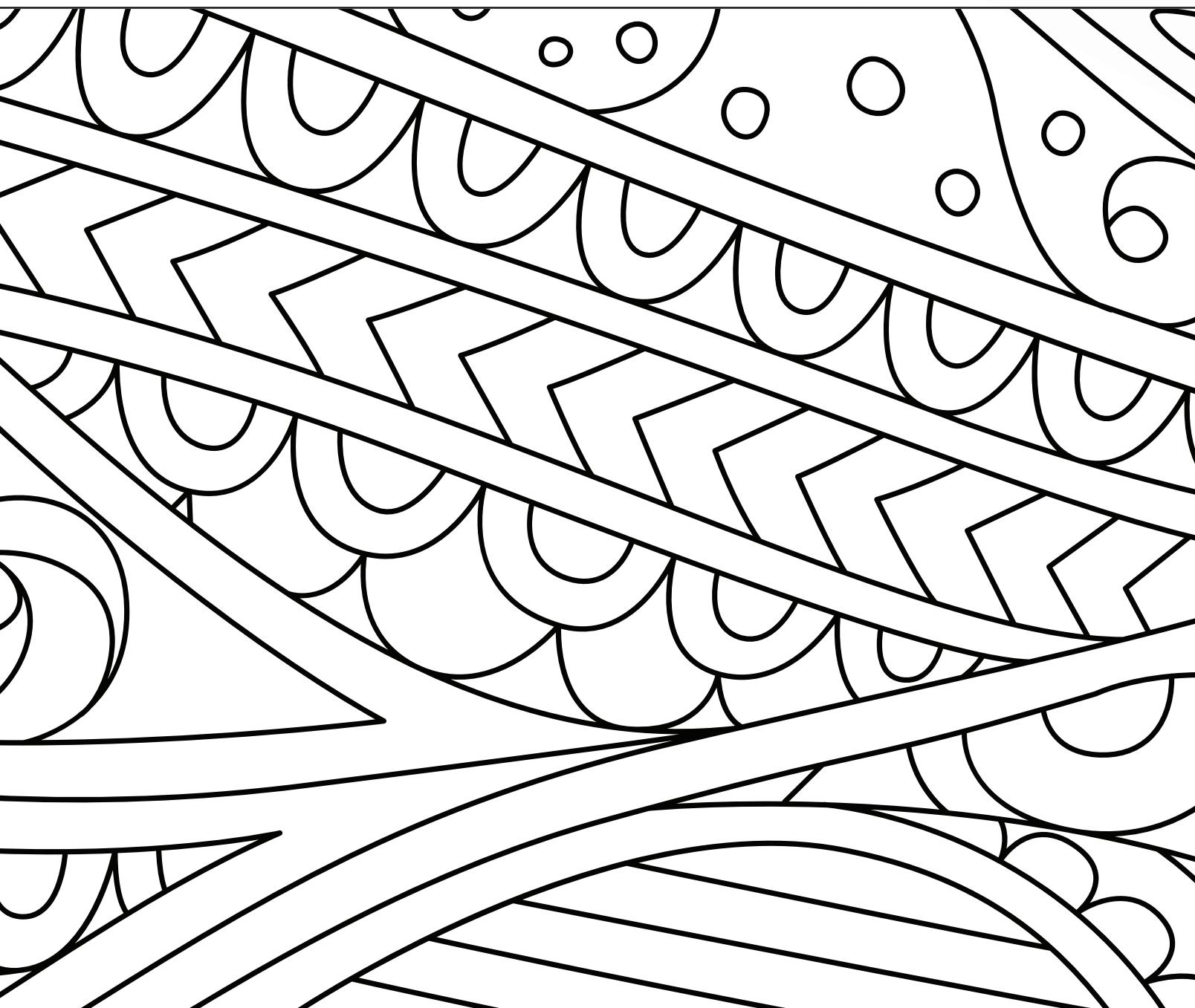
- **4 to 12 months: 12 to 16 hours**
- **1 to 2 years: 11 to 14 hours**
- **3 to 5 years: 10 to 13 hours**
- **6 to 12 years: nine to 12 hours**
- **13 to 18 years: eight to 10 hours**

To get more rest, keep the same times for going to bed and waking each day and end screen time at least 30 minutes before bed.

Get Creative with Coloring

Time to pull out your crayons, markers, and colored pencils—with your child. Coloring books are a great way to relax and exercise creativity.

According to a study published in *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*, 30 minutes of artistic activity, like coloring, may reduce anxiety. Take time to connect with your child as you color this page and you can both enjoy the benefits!



Keep Your Benefits Call Today!

Do you lose Medicaid eligibility this month? If you lose eligibility, you will not be able to:

take your child to the doctor; get medicine your child needs; use transportation services.

HSCSN can help so that you do not lose your medical benefits. Call us Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at **202-467-2737**.



THE HSC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
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with Special Needs, Inc.

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For more information, visit:
www.hschealth.org.

For reasonable accommodations,
please call **(202) 467-2737**.

Skip the Sweets This Summer

Parents, time to help your children stay healthy. It is important to be aware of hidden sugars. They are in breakfast cereals, soda, fruit-flavored drinks, and yogurt.

Added sugars can harm your child's health. They are added during processing. They are not the same as naturally sweet foods, like fruit. Added sugars add calories with no nutrients. They can cause weight gain. The American Academy of Family Physicians also warns that added sugars are linked to health problems. These include tooth decay, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and heart disease.

Reading food labels can help you limit sugar. Serve water instead of soda. Try adding fruit instead of sugar to plain oatmeal, yogurt, and cereal.



SIMPLE, HEALTHY SUMMER SNACKS

Stock your kitchen with these fast, healthy snack choices with low or no added sugars:

- Unsweetened, dried fruits.
- Low-fat cheese sticks.
- Unsalted nuts.
- Whole-grain crackers.
- Prepackaged fruits or veggies.
- Baked snack chips and salsa.
- Unsalted, air-popped popcorn.



If you do not speak and/or read English, please call 202-467-2737 between 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. A representative will assist you. English

Si no habla o lee inglés, llame al 202-467-2737 entre las 7:00 a.m. y las 5:30 p.m. Un representante se complacerá en asistirle. Spanish

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Nếu bạn không nói và/hoặc đọc tiếng Anh, xin gọi 202-467-2737 từ 7 giờ 00 sáng đến 5 giờ 30 chiều. Sẽ có người đại diện giúp bạn. Vietnamese

如果您不能講和/或不能閱讀英語，請在上午 7:00 到下午 5:30 之間給 202-467-2737 打電話，我們會有代表幫助您。Chinese

영어로 대화를 못하시거나 영어를 읽지 못하시는 경우, 오전 7시 00분에서 오후 5시 30분 사이에 202-467-2737 번으로 전화해 주시기 바랍니다. 담당 직원이 도와드립니다. Korean

Si vous ne parlez pas ou lisez l'anglais, s'il vous plaît appeler 202-467-2737 entre 7:00 du matin et 5:30 du soir. Un représentant vous aidera. French



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* * * GOVERNMENT OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DC MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR