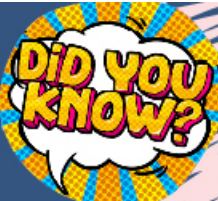


In This Week's Newsletter, You'll Find Fun Facts, Important Happenings in the News, and Relevant Info for **Expectant Moms & Parents of Babies and Toddlers**. There's Something for Everyone!

Fun Fact



Did you know that our skin "makes" vitamin D when it's exposed to sunlight? Yup. The UVB rays from the sun trigger a process that converts a vitamin D precursor in our skin to a usable form of vitamin D.

This is why vitamin D is called the "sunshine vitamin" and why your mother may have told you to "go outside and get some vitamin D" when you were younger. We'll talk more about vitamin D (and vitamin D supplementation) in the Hot Topics below.

But, first let's talk about an important (and unsettling) topic in the news these days...Fentanyl.

In the News



Accidental Ingestions & Fentanyl...

As you've probably heard by now, fentanyl poisonings & deaths have become a major problem in the United States. What you may not have heard is that children under 14 are dying of fentanyl poisoning at a faster rate than any other age group and infant & toddler deaths from fentanyl are on the rise.

While it's tough to even hear these statistics, it's important that we empower ourselves with knowledge and know what to look out for.

What is Fentanyl Exactly?

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that's prescribed by doctors to manage pain. It's 50-100 times stronger than morphine. When it's prescribed (and used properly) in a controlled setting, it's safe and effective. The problem is, non-prescribed fentanyl and its analogs are ending up in illegal drugs (think: ecstasy, cocaine, and heroin) AND in counterfeit pills that people are buying illicitly (not realizing they're laced with fentanyl).

How on Earth are Infants & Toddlers Getting Access to These Pills & Why are They Eating Them?

Most babies & toddlers who have ingested fentanyl either live in a home where fentanyl is present or they have visited a home or public venue where fentanyl-laced substances (such as pills and fentanyl patches) have been lying on the floor.

As we all know, babies and toddlers love to put stuff in their mouths. They'll gobble up small toys, coins, pills, and cleaning products (among other things) without batting an eye.

They're not trying to be naughty, this is just their way of exploring their environment (with ALL of their senses).

The problem, of course, is that some objects are choking hazards and others (such as medications and illegal drugs) can be lethal.

Signs of a Fentanyl Ingestion Include:

- Lethargy - the child is hard to rouse and seems out of it.
- Slow, shallow breathing.
- Small ("pinpoint") pupils.
- Vomiting.
- Pale skin that's cold & clammy.
- Blue lips & fingernails.

The Bottom Line & A Reality Check:

Even though fentanyl has become a public health crisis, the risk of a baby or toddler ingesting fentanyl remains low (particularly if he/she doesn't live in a home with prescription fentanyl or illicit drugs and pills).

Still, It Doesn't Hurt to Be Aware of This Problem and to Take the Following Precautions:

- Lock up your medicine cabinets. (This protects your child from other accidental ingestions, as well.)
- Do your best not to let your child put random things in his/her mouth at the playground or in other public settings. (Of course, the chances that your child would randomly put a fentanyl-containing product in his/her mouth while playing at a

playground are super low.)

- If you have an older child, be mindful of what he/she is doing online and through social media. **Why?** Because tweens & teens have been buying pills & other substances off the internet, not realizing that they contain fentanyl.
- Call 911 if your child is showing signs of fentanyl poisoning (as described above). Narcan (fancy name: Naloxone) is an over-the-counter medication that can reverse the effects of a fentanyl overdose if it's given in time.

Get Wise(r) About Accidental Poisonings in Kids (in General) and What to Do About Them.

Now, Let's Move On To This Week's Hot Topics & Revisit the Topic of Vitamin D...

Hot Topics



Pregnancy

Why is It Important to Get Enough Vitamin D (and Calcium) During Pregnancy?

Because calcium & vitamin D build strong **fetal** bones & teeth AND help guard against **preterm labor** (labor before 37 weeks) and **preeclampsia** (a condition characterized by pregnancy-induced hypertension and protein in the urine).

Doctors, therefore, recommend that pregnant women take 1,000 milligrams (mg) of supplemental calcium per day.

The jury is still out, though, on what the optimal daily dose of vitamin D should be for pregnant women. The American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends that pregnant women take at least 600 international units (IU) of supplemental vitamin D per day. However, some experts recommend taking higher daily doses of vitamin D during pregnancy.

Ask your doctor how much vitamin D he/she thinks you should take each day.

PediaTip: If your prenatal vitamin doesn't contain enough calcium or vitamin D to meet the daily requirements during pregnancy, don't worry. Just take a combined calcium & vitamin D supplement in addition to your prenatal vitamin. Run this by your doctor, though, first.

Baby (0-1 Years)

Does My Baby Need a Vitamin D Supplement?

The Short Answer: Only certain babies under 1 year of age require a vitamin D supplement.

The Longer Answer: Vitamin D (along with calcium) helps our children's bones and teeth grow properly. Although breast milk has a lot of benefits for babies, it's notoriously low in vitamin D. Therefore, the American Academy of Pediatrics (the AAP) recommends that babies under 1 year who are exclusively breastfed OR who take less than 32 ounces of formula per day take a vitamin D supplement.

The vitamin D supplement should ideally start on Day 1 of life, but most parents are honestly too tired & too overwhelmed to introduce it right off the bat. That's ok. Starting the vitamin D supplement after a few weeks works too. In addition, most formula-fed babies aren't able to take 32 ounces of formula per day until they're a bit older. Therefore, they may need to take a vitamin D supplement early on and discontinue it once they're taking 32+ ounces of formula daily.

How Much Vitamin D Should My Baby Take (if He/She Needs It)?

The AAP recommends that babies who need extra vitamin D, take 400 international units per day for the first year of life (even after they start solid foods).

Get Wise(r) About Vitamin D Supplementation in Babies and Which Vitamin D Supplements I Recommend [Here](#).

Toddler (1-3 Years)

Should Toddlers Take a Vitamin D Supplement?

The AAP recommends that ALL toddlers (and all kids over 1 year) take a vitamin D supplement (regardless of whether they were breastfed or formula fed & how much vitamin D they're currently getting through their diet).

At the 1-year mark (and beyond), the recommended daily dose of vitamin D goes up to 600 international units per day.

Caveat: Kids with chronic medical conditions may need to take more vitamin D than the average child. Therefore, make sure to consult with your child's pediatrician before starting a vitamin D supplement.

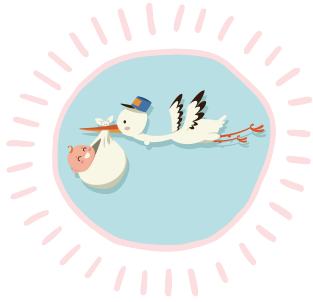
Stay Healthy & See You Next Week!

p.s. Just a friendly reminder that the information in this newsletter (and on the PediaWise website) is

meant for informational purposes only and shouldn't act as a substitute for going to your child's pediatrician or any other medical provider.

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