



Signs of A Weakened Immune System & How You Can Help Your Child

FIRST-TIME PARENTS

ARTICLE

JUN 10, 2021

4 MINS

A strong immune system is the key for a healthy growing child. It gives them that extra protection to go on with their daily playtime. Parents must be aware that the immune system in children is not on par with adults. Hence, they are more vulnerable to viral infection.

Common cold, flu, warts and more serious illnesses are what your children are up against once they step outside. So, be a tiger mum or a lion dad if you have to by identifying the tell-tale signs of a weakened immune system and help your child to boost their first line of defence against viral diseases.

Recurring and frequent respiratory infections

Children with recurring and frequent cold and flu should raise a red flag for parents to really pay attention to their child's immune system. It is common for children in a year, to experience between 6 to 10 respiratory infections. Typically, these kinds of infections are mild, self-limiting and should be easily taken care of, but anything more, it may suggest that their immune system is weak.

Mild wounds take an extra-long time to heal

Cuts and bruises are quite common among children. They fall, bump into random objects or accidentally cut themselves, but it should heal in no time. If you notice that your child's mild wounds take longer than usual to heal, it is wise to start checking up on their immune system. Wound healing relies on several factors, and eating habits are one of those.

Difficulty in gaining weight

Being underweight and stunted growth usually point towards malnutrition during infancy. However, this isn't always the case, there are times where it signals a more serious complication. Your child might find it hard to fight off viral diseases with a weakened immune system, rendering them difficult to gain weight due to the lack of nutrition and essential vitamins.

Nutritional Deficiencies

Skin disorders, brittle nails, digestion problems and fatigue are common signs for nutritional deficiencies. If your kids are having these symptoms for no apparent reason, parents should keep a close watch on them and start looking into the possibility of a weakened immune system.

How You Can Help Your Child

Playtime in the big outdoors

Get your child outside of an enclosed area and let them breathe in fresh clean air and bask under the bright sunny day. Hop on a bicycle, hike up the local trails or even climb up the monkey bars. To make it more enjoyable, join them! It makes a great time for family bonding as well.

Reduce sugar intake

There are different types of sugar; the good ones that come naturally from fruits and even honey*, and then there is processed sugar that carries very little nutrients. Heavy consumption of refined sugar requires an equal amount of nutrients to metabolise them, and instead of fighting off viral diseases, your child can easily succumb to it. Give them freshly blended watermelon juice over carbonated drinks that are doused with bad sugars.

Practise hygienic routines

The simplest practice of washing your hands can go a long way in boosting your child's immune system. Follow the five steps of washing your hands right; make it a habit for your child to wash their hands after going to the loo; shower before jumping into bed and use hand sanitizers. These steps will help to reduce bugs and keep the risky viral illnesses at bay.

Immune boosting snacks

Fruits and vegetables work wonders to boost our immune system, but as we all know, kids are notorious for being picky eaters! Make it bright, colourful, and entertaining so your kids would be asking for more. Vegetable sticks such as carrots, cucumbers, and celeries are perfect to be paired with some delicious homemade dip. For some appetizing colours, chop strawberries, apples, watermelons or mangoes up for your kids.

Probiotics work like a charm

There are a number of foods with natural probiotics in them and the most known is of course yogurt, which is great to be taken with other immune boosting fruits like the ones mentioned above. If your child prefers savoury dishes, miso is also a great alternative. You can make miso soup with some dried seaweed, tofu, and chopped spring onion to make it a full meal.

References:

<http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org/Children-s-Health-Wellness/strengthening-your-childs-immune-system.html>

<https://www.avogel.co.uk/health/immune-system/tips-for-keeping-your-childs-immune-system-strong/>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/immune.html>

<https://academic.oup.com/cid/article/46/10/1582/294025>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2903966/>

<https://academic.oup.com/bmb/article/61/1/115/286883>

<https://www.healthline.com/health/malnutrition#iron>

<https://advancedtissue.com/2015/05/the-immune-system-and-wound-healing/>

<https://www.mindbodygreen.com/articles/probiotics-for-kids-everything-you-need-to-know>

**Honey plays a crucial role in taste development, particularly in early life, as it*

introduces infants to a diverse range of flavors and helps shape their palate.

However, honey can contain the bacteria that may cause infant botulism. Consequently, honey should not be introduced before 12 months of age unless the spores of Clostridium botulinum have been inactivated by adequate high-pressure and high-temperature treatment, as used by industry.

Whenever honey is used in our products, it undergoes an externally validated treatment that ensures our products are safe to consume.