

## How to Keep Your Kids Healthy this School Year

Written by Dr. Robert James, Pediatrician with Bayless Integrated Healthcare  
Monday, 14 August 2017 09:48 -

---



Children should get a physical exam done and get the appropriate immunizations. Immunizations will strengthen the immune system and protect from common illness. These are required once the child is 4 years old and again between 10 and 11 years old. The use of immunizations will prevent epidemics of measles, mumps, chicken pox, meningitis and German measles. During this visit, children should also get the medications they will need during the school year. The school should be given instructions on medications, and the nurse or faculty member should know the name of the medication, as well as how to use and store it. This will decrease school absenteeism for the child and work absentees for the parents.

When shopping, parents can also make sure to purchase the proper backpack. A proper backpack should have a padded back, shoulder straps and should be organized for easy use. Backpacks should be packed light, equal to about 10 percent of your child's body weight. The correct way to wear a backpack is to put both straps over shoulders. Children who choose to carry their bag over one shoulder when the bag is light should alternate shoulders throughout the day.

When traveling to school, there are a few things parents should keep in mind. Parents should ensure that their children have a safe route to school, and the children should use proper techniques when riding the bus and crossing the street. If the children are being driven to school, they should be transported in the appropriate car seat or booster seat. Parents should also make sure they know who is transporting their child to and from school at all times.

Bullying is another problem that can affect your child's health. Bullying can come in the form of verbal, physical or cyberattacks. Children should be taught to inform someone if they are being bullied or see bullying occur in the school. Parents should teach their children how to handle being bullied. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends, "that a child who is being bullied to respond by [looking] the bully in the eye, stand tall and stay calm in a difficult situation and walk away."