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## COULD MY CHILD HAVE ASTHMA?

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### Check These Symptoms, Then Talk with Your Doctor

There are no clear markers to predict exactly which children will develop asthma. However, there are clues and symptoms, according to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology:

- Does your child seem fatigued? A child with asthma might slow down, stop playing, or become easily irritated.
  - Does your child have problems sleeping because of nighttime coughing or difficulty breathing?
  - Is there a family history of asthma and/or allergy?
- If you answered "yes" to any of these questions and you suspect your child has asthma, talk with his doctor.

Visit [www.HealthMart.com](http://www.HealthMart.com) to learn more about asthma prevention and treatment.



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## SKIN CANCER UPDATE

### Skin Checks Can Save Your Life

Skin cancers are divided into two main types: keratinocyte cancers (basal and squamous-cell skin cancers) and melanomas. Basal and squamous-cell skin cancers are the most common skin cancers. They develop from cells called keratinocytes, the most common cells in the skin.

Melanomas are cancers that develop from melanocytes, the cells that make the brown pigment that gives skin its color. Melanocytes can also form benign growths called moles. There are other types of skin cancers, but these are much less common.

It is important for doctors to tell these types of skin cancer apart, because they are treated differently, says the American Cancer Society. Get regular skin checks, and if you see a change in a wart or mole, or notice some other skin abnormality, see your doctor.

### Is It Time for a Bone-Density Test?

#### *Check Your Osteoporosis Risk Factors*

Some risk factors increase your likelihood of developing osteoporosis. The more risk factors you have, the more likely you are to get osteoporosis and broken bones, according to the National Osteoporosis Foundation. Some examples include being small and thin, older age, being female, having a diet low in calcium, having a vitamin D deficiency, smoking, and drinking too much alcohol. Your healthcare provider may recommend a bone-density test if you are:

- A woman age 65 or older, even without any risk factors
  - A man age 70 or older, even without any risk factors
  - A woman or man over age 50 who has broken a bone
  - A woman going through menopause with certain risk factors
  - A postmenopausal woman who has stopped taking estrogen therapy (ET) or hormone therapy (HT)
  - Using certain medications, including steroids, on a long-term basis
  - Having a disease or condition that can cause bone loss (such as rheumatoid arthritis or anorexia nervosa)
- A postmenopausal woman under age 65 with one or more risk factors for osteoporosis
  - A man age 50 to 70 with one or more risk factors for osteoporosis



### DON'T LOSE SLEEP OVER KIDS' BEDWETTING

#### *Several Treatment Options Are Available*

Giving children control over bedwetting helps them overcome not only the nighttime nuisance but also the stigma of it, say doctors at Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) in Houston.

"Because studies have yet to identify the cause of nighttime bedwetting, no one treatment is guaranteed to work for everyone. Nevertheless, the course of action with which the child is most comfortable tends to produce the best outcome," says Edmond T. Gonzales, Jr., M.D., professor of

urology at BCM.

Some treatment options include prescription medications. One commonly used medicine makes the body react as if dehydrated so the kidneys retain liquids overnight. Another treatment involves an alarm system, worn in pajamas, that sounds when it becomes wet.

More commonly, doctors suggest parents limit the amount of liquids children drink in the evening and schedule a bathroom break before bed.

## HEALTH UPDATE

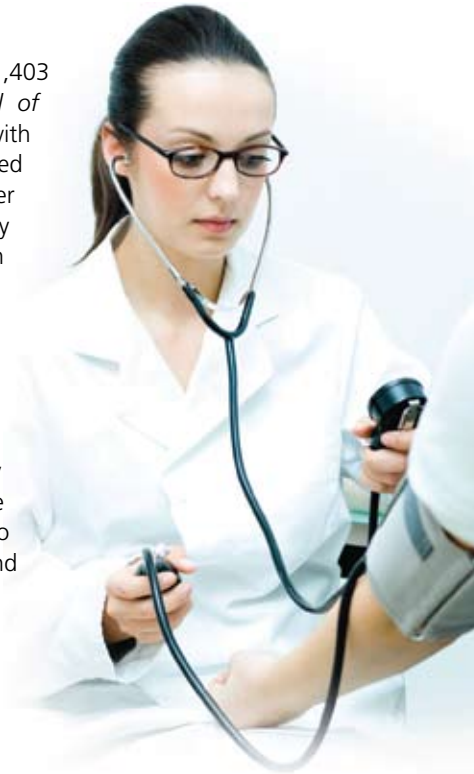
### High Blood Pressure Linked to Dementia *Good Health Habits Can Help Keep Blood Pressure in Check*

Doctors are calling for an increased emphasis on good health habits as studies make connections between high blood pressure and dementia.

The Women's Health Initiative Memory Study of 1,403 participants, published recently in the *Journal of Clinical Hypertension*, determined that people with hypertension (elevated blood pressure) developed significant numbers of white-matter lesions over the eight years of the study. Such lesions, usually the result of damage to the small blood vessels in the brain, are a risk factor for dementia.

In an effort to head off high-blood-pressure problems before they lead to serious health consequences, doctors are emphasizing the need for adopting good health habits from an early age. Exercise regularly. Eat a low-fat diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. And have your blood pressure checked regularly. If you do have hypertension, it needs to be treated and controlled.

Want more information on high blood pressure? Visit [www.HealthMart.com](http://www.HealthMart.com).



## DID YOU KNOW?

- Got allergies? Finding the right treatment is critical, but it's also important to try to avoid what you are allergic to. If you have a pollen allergy, keep your windows shut, take a shower after being active outdoors, and try to stay indoors when pollen counts are highest. All of these things can make a big difference in how you feel.

— Source: *The American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology*



## EYE-HEALTH UPDATE

### Got Pinkeye? Here's Help

Conjunctivitis ("pinkeye") is an inflammation of the conjunctiva, the tissue covering part of the eye and inner surface of the eyelid. It can be infectious or noninfectious. Noninfectious conjunctivitis can be caused by allergies or irritation, according to Seattle Children's Hospital.

The incubation period for conjunctivitis depends on what's causing it, but usually ranges from a couple of days to a couple of weeks.

The most common symptom is an itchy or gritty feeling in the eye. There often will be some discharge and pain, swelling of the conjunctiva, and the very pink or red coloring that gives the infection its nickname.

Bacterial conjunctivitis is contagious as soon as symptoms appear and remains so as long as there is a discharge or until 24 hours after antibiotics are started. Viral conjunctivitis is generally contagious before symptoms appear and can remain so as long as symptoms last. Allergic and irritant conjunctivitis are not contagious.

Wash your hands after interacting with anyone who has the bacterial or viral conjunctivitis. Don't share washcloths, towels, etc. If you have conjunctivitis, wash your hands frequently, especially after touching your eyes.

Your doctor can determine what type of conjunctivitis you have and whether eye drops or ointment are needed.



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## UPDATE: KIDS' EYES

### Racing and Zapping Their Way to Better Visual Skills

Do your kids have a PlayStation or an Xbox 360? Are you wondering if there's any redeeming value in the hours that they spend transfixed by video games?

According to a new study published in the medical journal *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, regular gamers are fast and accurate information processors, not only during game play, but in real-life situations as well.

In the study, researchers from the University of Rochester in Rochester, New York looked at

all of the existing literature on video gaming and found some surprising insights in the data. For example, they found that avid players got faster not only on their game of choice, but on a variety of unrelated laboratory tests of reaction time. Playing video games enhances performance of visual and spatial memory and improves performance on tasks requiring divided attention, they found.

Want more information on eye health? Visit [www.HealthMart.com](http://www.HealthMart.com).

## HEALTH TIP



### Childhood Vaccination Gaps Are Narrowing

About three-quarters of U.S. children received all of the recommended vaccinations in 2008 (the most recent data available), up from about half in 2000, according to a recent CDC study.

— Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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