

# TAKAO PEDIATRICS

## SEASONAL EMAIL NEWSLETTER

• SPRING 2021 •

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## Routine and Coronavirus Vaccines

### The COVID-19 Vaccine: What We Know

The FDA has issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for people age 16 and older and for the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for people age 18 and older. The two-dose vaccines are proven to be approximately 95% effective in all recipients, with some mild side effects (arm soreness, fatigue, and high temperatures). These vaccines will protect against newer strains of the virus as well. Whether we will need an annual dose of the vaccine or whether it prevents the spread of the virus is unknown.

### When can my child and I get vaccinated?

Vaccine distribution in California follows CDC's recommendations, which means that most of our healthy families and the general public are currently ineligible. However, multiple sources report that the vaccine will be widely available for parents and older children in Spring or Summer 2021, and for younger children in Fall or Winter 2021. We will keep our families updated on their eligibility on [this page of our website](#).

"Vaccination trials for children are essential to best understand any potential unique immune responses and/or safety concerns in that population," says Dr. Bhavsar, a pediatric disease specialist. "We also need to ensure that the vaccine doses are safe and tolerable in children", which is the primary focus of most drug development companies, currently.

## Getting Tested for COVID-19: When and How

We have several local testing options for our patients and parents. Although our office does not offer COVID-19 testing, we have highlighted some testing centers with streamlined testing for patients of all ages on [this page of our website](#). If you are looking for testing options that are specifically for children with symptoms (fever, cough, dyspnea, myalgia, URI symptoms, loss of taste/smell, GI issues), Children's Hospital Oakland also offers testing.

## Our Office Vaccine Philosophy

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, we would like to emphasize the importance of staying up-to-date with routine vaccines. Our providers and office staff believe that routine vaccines are critical to the care and maintenance of our patients' health. Check out [this page of our website](#) for a complete description of our vaccine philosophy.



## Managing Seasonal Allergies

*During the springtime, patients with pollen allergies may suffer from congestion, fatigue, and headaches. To manage your child's allergies we recommend the following:*

- Staying well-hydrated by drinking 5-8 glasses of water each day.
- Taking over-the-counter Zyrtec, Benadryl, or Claritin, as needed. For patient-specific treatment recommendations, call our office.
- Keeping the windows in your child's room *closed* during the day and *open* at night.

## Seasonal Reminders

### Spring Cleaning

- While tidying up your home, don't forget to **check your medications' expiration dates and throw away anything that's past its use-by date!** If you have any questions about what to keep and what to toss, call our office!
- Keep your child's room dust-free by **vacuuming once or twice per week and keeping their bed clean and clear of stuffed animals.**

### Exercise and Sleep

- As the weather gets warmer, **safely engage in daily exercise for at least one hour.** We suggest: biking with friends (while wearing a helmet!) and taking masked hikes. Have a dog? Take them for a walk!
- Be sun safe! Apply **sunscreen** and wear **sunglasses and hats** when playing outside.
- With daylight savings time here, be sure to keep a consistent sleep schedule. **Get at least 8-10 hours of sleep per night!** For more details, read the "Infant Spotlight" below!



# Newborn and Infant Spotlight



## Dr. Takao's Essential Toolkit for the Baby

New parents are often faced with questions and concerns regarding what to purchase for their newborns. When parents approach Dr. Takao about what types of products and tools he recommends for maintaining your child's health, he suggests the following items: **Flanders Buttocks Ointment** for diaper rashes, **Infants' Tylenol** for teething and pain management, the **Fridababy NoseFrida** for nose hygiene, and **Infants' Mylicon Drops** for gas relief.

For links to purchase these items, go to [this page on our website](#) or to our Office Blog!

## Breast Milk vs Formula

### What's Best for You and Your Baby?

**Why breast milk?** Many parents elect to breastfeed for the immunological benefits, digestion support, and neurological strengthening that breast milk provides.

**Why formula?** Some parents prefer formula for babies with specific dietary needs or particularly sensitive tummies.

**What do we recommend?** Both approaches are safe and healthy for your growing baby, so the choice is yours. Our doctors will help you craft your unique, personal feeding plan.

**Trouble lactating?** We have a variety of lactation consultants who we recommend, and have both in-person and virtual visits.

## 5 Sleep Training Tips

1. **Back to Sleep:** Position your baby to sleep flat on their back.
2. **Firm and Flat Surfaces:** All sleeping surfaces need to be firm and covered with a fitted sheet. Avoid keeping too many soft objects in their bed.
3. **Room Temperature Control:** Keep your child's sleeping space cool and clear of allergens.
4. **Stick to a Schedule:** Keep consistent bedtimes for you and your child.
5. **Sleep when Your Baby Sleeps:** Parents deserve to sleep well - be sure to sleep when baby sleeps too!



# Child and Adolescent Spotlight

## Suggested Reading for Parents

### The New York Times

- [Helping Children with Anxiety During the Pandemic](#)
- [It's Not Just Adults Who Are Stressed. Kids Are, Too.](#)
- [How to Keep Children's Stress From Turning Into Trauma](#)
- [Quaranteenagers: Strategies for Parenting in Close Quarters](#)

### Other Sources

- [What to Do if You & Your Teen Don't Agree on Social Distancing](#)
- [Teenagers and Reopening](#)

## Conversations About Your Child's Mental Health

With the emergence of the pandemic and associated lifestyle changes, your child may feel overwhelmed, emotionally distant, and anxious. The American Psychological Association reports that teenagers have expressed elevated stress levels over the past year. This may manifest itself in irritability, withdrawn behavior, and negative self-talk. Parents may want to start conversations about stress mediation with these questions:

*"I noticed you seemed down last week. What can we do to help? I just want to make sure you're okay."*

*"We understand this is a new and complicated time. How do you feel about things changing?"*

*"What has being a student during a pandemic taught you? How would you change your experience?"*

## Nutrition: Supporting a Healthy Diet When Cooking at Home

**Creating a balanced meal:** To support healthy growth, children should have three meals per day, consisting of an equal amount of vegetables, proteins, and starches.

**Seasonal Fruits and Vegetables:** If possible, purchase produce that is in season! These fruits and veggies have a better taste and improved nutritional value.

**Hydration, hydration, hydration:** No matter the season, children need a minimum of 5-6 glasses of water per day to support digestion, activity, and sleep! For more info, see [this page on our website](#).

**Getting Started with Meal Planning:** Plan your family's weekday meals to ensure you meet nutritional needs and maintain a balanced diet. Use the guide below to get started!

### Breakfast

- 1 slice of whole grain bread or bagel
- 2 tbs of low-fat cream cheese
- 1 egg, fried or boiled
- 1 cup low-fat yogurt

### Lunch

- 1 whole grain pita
- 2 oz lean meat
- 1/2 cup shredded lettuce
- 2 slices tomato
- 1 tsp mustard
- 1 tsp ketchup

### Snack

- Peanut butter, protein, or fruit smoothie
- Pretzels, crackers, and peanut butter
- Sliced fruit
- 1 oz baked chips

### Dinner

- 1 cup cooked pasta
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce
- 1/2 cup sauteed vegetables
- 1 tbs grated cheese
- 8 oz low-fat milk