



Date: September 2, 2011

Contact:

Megan D. Smith  
Director of Communications  
[msmith@ohioafp.org](mailto:msmith@ohioafp.org)

**BACK TO SCHOOL CHECK-UP**  
**ASSESS THE WELL-BEING OF YOUR CHILD WITH YOUR FAMILY PHYSICIAN**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)— While you finalize your back-to-school list of school supplies and new clothes, be sure to schedule a check-up appointment between your child and family physician.

An annual visit to your family physician around the beginning of the school year gives the physician, parent and child a chance to talk. As a parent, questions to ask a physician might include:

- Are my child's immunizations up to date?
- Should my child have a flu shot?
- What signs should I look for that would signal any emotional issues my child could have with school?

"It is also important to let the physician know about any recent illnesses and of any known problems from the previous school years," said Thomas Freytag, M.D., a family physician from Lima, Ohio.

Children may also have issues such as the fear of entering a new grade or school and getting along with classmates. Your child will also complete a physical exam and may receive advice on eating well and exercising.

"To make sure there are no unknown barriers to learning, especially at a younger age, I actually prefer to see my patients, unless they are just starting into school, after they have attended for a month or so. This gives me time to address problems that may be occurring with classes, peers, social issues or problems with sporting activities," explained Freytag.

It is recommended that along with a check-up, student athletes also get a sport physical so that their bodies are prepared for the fall sports season.

According to Freytag, ankle, knee, shoulder and the summer heat-related illness are the most common school sports-related injuries. At least one month of conditioning is ideal to prevent injuries before beginning a new sport or starting a new season.

Returning back to school can be challenging and it may take time to create a new routine for the family but Freytag suggests to "simply keep the lines of communication open. Let them (your children) know that you are willing to listen. Try to set a nightly routine on school nights ensuring adequate sleep. And, most importantly, create a schedule that includes some family time."

*The Ohio Academy of Family Physicians is a statewide professional association with more than 4,100 members, including practicing physicians, family medicine residents and medical students. The scope of family medicine encompasses all ages, both sexes and every disease entity. Family physicians provide comprehensive, continuing care to all members of the family.*



Date: September 2, 2011

Contact: Megan D. Smith  
Director of Communications  
msmith@ohioafp.org

**BACK TO SCHOOL CHECK-UP**  
***ASSESS THE WELL-BEING OF YOUR CHILD WITH YOUR FAMILY PHYSICIAN***

**Beginning of School Year**

- Schedule a wellness check-up visit for your child with your family physician.
- During this visit, your doctor can perform a physical examination with height, weight and blood pressure measurements.
- Use this time to discuss your child's diet and exercise habits and ways to improve them.
- Make sure your child's immunizations are up-to-date, especially booster shots for older children.
- If your child has a chronic condition such as diabetes, asthma or needs to take medication on a regular basis, meet with the school nurse to provide all the information and directions needed.
- Visit the dentist before school starts so you do not have to juggle around school hours or after-school activities.
- Take time to talk about the upcoming school year with your child. Does your child have any fears, anxieties or challenges that they want to discuss?
- Discuss study habits and a designated homework time with your child. Establish expectations before the first day of school.

**Throughout the School Year**

- Incorporate healthier snack and lunch items into your child's diet. Be a good role model by keeping and eating healthy foods in your home.
- Educate your child on the role good nutrition plays in their overall well being.
- Make sure your child eats a healthy breakfast before getting on the bus.
- Encourage your child to be physically active, whether in an organized sport, taking walks around the block or playing baseball in the backyard.
- Set a good example. Exercise regularly yourself or with your child.

Source: [www.kidsource.com](http://www.kidsource.com) (KidSource Online)