

From Band-aids to Vitamins
Five Health Mistakes that Good Parents Make
(And What to Do Instead...)
Dr. Mark William Cochran

Mistake # 1: Putting a band-aid on every boo boo

Rushing to put a band-aid on every cut and scrape teaches a child that healing requires an external intervention. Instead, teach children that they will heal all by themselves. Celebrate the wonder of a scab forming, then falling off, then share the excitement when the healing is complete. ("And you did it all by yourself!") The most important health lesson we can teach our children is that we all have the inherent ability to heal and be healthy. Every boo boo is a valuable opportunity to empower your child.

Mistake # 2: Substituting vitamins for real nutrition

Giving a vitamin every day sends the message that health comes from a pill bottle. Vitamins reinforce the pill mentality daily. Nutrition comes from fresh, whole food. Serve kids the fruits and vegetables they enjoy, and teach them that *that* is where their nutrients come from.

Mistake # 3: Keeping kids too squeaky clean

Studies on *The Hygiene Hypothesis* show that kids who live in overly sterile environments--and whose immune systems are therefore deprived of the opportunity for robust development--have an increased risk of asthma and allergies. Even autoimmune diseases and autism have been linked to the hygiene hypothesis. Studies have shown lower incidences of these diseases in kids who go to daycare, have more siblings, live on farms and have pets, and therefore are exposed to more germs. Rolling around on the playground and being covered with wet puppy kisses promote lifelong health. Let kids get dirty!

Mistake # 4: Freaking out over fever

Fever is a powerful healing process. Rather than rushing to give a child medication or an herbal remedy to bring down a fever, teach your child that the fever is a gift. Let it work its magic. (Again: "You're getting better all by yourself!")

Mistake # 5: Kissing it to make it feel better

A better approach is: "Let me kiss *you* and make *you* feel better." This lets the parent show love, compassion and understanding while shifting the emphasis away from the problem, and to the child as a whole, self-healing person.

Dr. Mark William Cochran is the author of the award winning book, *Oby's Wisdom! A Caveman's Simple Guide to Health and Well-being*. To download a free chapter of *Oby's Wisdom*, visit www.ObysWisdom.com