



Baby Buzz

A Newsletter from Palmetto Healthy Start

Palmetto Healthy Start Supports Parents of Preemies

Parents of Preemies is a new support group offered by Palmetto Healthy Start, in conjunction with Palmetto Health Women's Center and the March of Dimes, to help women who have had premature births improve their chances of delivering a healthy baby the next time they become pregnant.

The group meets the second Wednesday of every month, 10:30 a.m.–noon, at Palmetto Health Women's Center, 1801 Sunset Dr., Columbia. The next meeting is May 11.

The group's purpose is to help women who have had premature babies understand their risk factors so they can reduce those risks BEFORE their next pregnancy. Participants receive up-to-date information and resources on prematurity,

refreshments, door prizes and an opportunity to share their experiences with others. Free childcare is provided.

According to the March of Dimes, 14.2 percent of babies born in South Carolina in 2002 were premature. Prematurity is the leading cause of infant death in South Carolina.

"Although the cause and treatment for prematurity is not completely understood, there are things women can do to reduce their risk," said Kim Alston, Palmetto Healthy Start interim director.

For more information or to register, call 296-CARE (2273). For information about premature birth, pregnancy and birth defects, visit the March of Dimes Pregnancy and Newborn Health Education Center at www.marchofdimes.com.

Spring 2005

Free Childbirth Education Classes

Make your delivery a rewarding one by attending free preparation for childbirth classes at Palmetto Health Richland. This five-week series will help you prepare for labor, birth, newborn care and early parenthood.

Upcoming sessions begin May 5, June 16 and July 28. Classes are held Thursdays from 6:30–8:30 p.m. Tours of the facility where you will deliver are available, and refreshments will be provided.

To be eligible for these classes, you must be pregnant, live in Richland, Lexington and Fairfield counties and be covered by Medicaid or have no health insurance.

Call 296-2273 or 1-800-249-4340 to register and say that you want to sign up for the Palmetto Healthy Start classes. Register early so that you can attend during your last trimester.

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Free Mommy & Me Activity

Mothers and babies are invited to a free Mommy & Me activity sponsored by Palmetto Healthy Start, May 7, from 3-5 p.m. at Edventure Children's Museum, 211 Gervais Street, Columbia. The class is open to mothers and children under three who live in Richland, Lexington and Fairfield counties and meet income eligibility requirements.

The purpose of the activity is to help mothers and babies bond while building important developmental skills. Participants will play games, sing songs and interact with other moms and babies. Refreshments will be provided. After the activity, participants can explore the museum.

For mothers with older children, free childcare will be provided for one additional child while mother and baby participate in the activity.

The deadline to register is May 3. Seating is limited. To register, call 296-CARE (2273) or 1-800-249-4340.



Ask Children's Hospital: Swallowing Foreign Objects

By Dr. Rathna P. Amarnath, pediatrician

My grandchild is at the age where he puts everything in his mouth. What can I do to make my home safer when he visits?

Toddlers are curious. They explore – and taste – everything they can get their hands on. Everything from aquarium pebbles to earrings to drill bits provokes their curiosity. It is vital for parents, grandparents, siblings, babysitters and caregivers to keep small objects where babies can't reach them.

Coins are among the most common objects children

swallow. Although most pennies will pass quickly through the child's system, they can be dangerous when they become lodged. Pennies minted after 1982 are made almost entirely of zinc. Mixed with stomach acid, they can become as corrosive as car battery acid.

Another common item that can cause serious damage is batteries, particularly the tiny button type batteries used in watches, hearing aids, cameras and electronic gadgets. These batteries contain corrosive alkali and may contain life-threatening quantities of mercury.

When released in the stomach or intestine, battery fluid may eat through the lining. If you know the child has swallowed a battery of any type, seek medical attention immediately. Symptoms and complications include abdominal pain and tenderness, constipation, vomiting and fever.

Ingesting household powders and liquids can cause serious burns in the mouth and esophagus. You might set a cup of detergent down while you answer a phone call, not realizing how quickly it attracts a curious child. In a split second, a child can ingest enough to cause harm. Symptoms include burns on the lips or in the mouth. There also may be wheezing due to respiratory complications.

Caustic household substances include detergents, pool cleaning chemicals, drain cleaners, hair relaxers and many types of cleaning products in powder or liquid form. Because 60- 80 percent of these caustic ingestion cases may have swollen air passages, the child may stay on a ventilator for four or five days. A burn in the esophagus can cause life-long problems. If you suspect your child has ingested a caustic substance, call 911 immediately. Don't assume the child is out of danger if it looks like there is only a small burn.

Older children may choke on hot dogs, pieces of meat or large bites of food, which can become lodged in the esophagus. When toddlers run around while eating, they are more likely to swallow poorly chewed meat, which can get lodged in the esophagus. The main thing parents, babysitters, grandparents and caregivers should know is that this does happen. It's important to educate friends and family to minimize your child's risk. The best action is prevention.

Children's Hospital offers these tips to protect your child:

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FAMILY HEALTH FESTIVAL

Saturday, May 14, 2005

11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

**Elmwood-Roy Lynch Park
(corner of Lincoln and Abbeville
Streets, across from Logan
Elementary)**

- Health information booths
- Health screenings
- Kid fingerprinting and IDs from Columbia Police Department
- Games, prizes, a cake walk, cookout, popcorn
- Music, story time and MORE!

**Palmetto Healthy
Start's FREE event
celebrating children
and families**



**For more information, call
Palmetto Healthy Start,
296-3780**

Palmetto Healthy Start Receives Prematurity Prevention Grant

Palmetto Healthy Start recently received a \$40,000 grant from the March of Dimes for prematurity prevention. The grant will fund Palmetto Healthy Start's existing Prematurity Prevention Partnership (PPP), which is designed to draw together, strengthen and extend the combination of interventions that have shown to reduce premature births.

The program works like this. Women who receive their prenatal care at Palmetto Health's Women's Center are assessed by their OB

nurses for prematurity risk factors. These assessments are analyzed by Palmetto Healthy Start's prematurity prevention nurse who then drafts individualized plans addressing each risk factor. Palmetto Healthy Start's resource mothers visit the women at home to help them understand, finalize and follow their plans.

Not only does the program help pregnant women, it also helps those who are not pregnant but have delivered a premature infant. Because they're at high risk for delivering

prematurely again, and they have very few resources to help them, PPP has started a support group for women who have delivered prematurely. PPP also is working with existing programs and the faith community to create, largely through volunteerism, a care and support system.

For more information about Palmetto Healthy Start's Prematurity Prevention Partnership, call 296-3780.

Choices TV Ad to Air in May

Keep an eye out for a new commercial encouraging teens to make healthy choices. The ad is the result of Palmetto Healthy Start's Choices campaign and contest, which was open to high school juniors in Richland and Fairfield counties. Students at Olympia Learning Center, an alternative school for grades 4-12, submitted the winning entry.

Fifteen students in Puree Rivers' after-school program worked on the project. They wrote the script, designed storyboards and cast the actors. JaJuan Calvin and Sharron Ravnell, along with Rivers, starred in the ad, which encourages teens to "ask somebody" before they make a life-changing decision. Students also helped set up equipment, perform sound checks and edit the ad.

The 30-second commercial will run throughout May for Pregnancy Prevention Month.

Babies born to teens have a 37 percent greater chance of being born too small, which is a major risk factor of infant death. Palmetto Healthy Start is working to reduce teen pregnancy rates, which could help reduce the number of infant deaths.

Continued from page 2

- Put change in a piggy bank and store the bank out of reach.
- Keep jewelry boxes, cosmetics and toolboxes tightly closed and out of reach.
- Keep items like toothpicks, razors, safety pins, buttons, nails and small toys out of reach.
- Periodically check floors, beds, tables, sofas and chairs for any items a child could swallow.
- When you buy a device that uses batteries, check to see that the battery compartment cannot be easily opened. Tape it shut if necessary.
- To see if a toy is potentially dangerous because of its size, place it – without compressing it – into cardboard toilet paper roll. If the object fits entirely within the tube, do not give it to a child under the age of three or to any child who still puts items in the mouth.

Warning signs of ingesting a foreign object include gagging, drooling and sometimes coughing. A swallowed object can close your child's air passage.

If your child has swallowed a foreign object or substance:

1. Use the Heimlich maneuver if the child is choking and turning blue. Call 911 immediately.
2. If initial choking distress has passed, contact your pediatrician for instructions.
3. Observe the child closely. A coin or object can be lodged in the esophagus for days.
4. Do not feed the child or administer liquids. This will make the object lodge farther down.
5. If your child ingests a caustic substance, call 911 and Poison Control immediately at 803-777-1117 (Columbia) or 803-922-1117.



Ask Children's Hospital is provided as an educational service. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Contact your primary care physician or other qualified health care provider for specific medical advice, diagnosis and treatment.

Calendar of Events

May	5	Richland County Consortium (Training) Benedict-Allen Community Development Center, 2601 Read Street, Columbia 4–5:30 p.m.	June	16	Appreciation of Fathers Hopkins Park, 150 Hopkins Park Road, Hopkins 6–7:30 p.m.
	10	Fairfield County Consortium (Training) Fairfield County Parenting Center 104 Old Camden Road, Winnsboro 4–5:30 p.m.		21	Appreciation of Fathers Fairfield County Parenting Center 104 Old Camden Road, Winnsboro 6–7:30 p.m.
	14	Family Health Festival Elmwood –Roy Lynch Park (Corner of Lincoln and Abbeville Streets), Columbia 11 a.m.–3 p.m.		23	Appreciation of Fathers Parklane Apartments, 8100 Bayfield Road, Columbia 6–7:30 p.m.
	19	Appreciation of Mothers Caughman Road Park 2800 Trotter Road, Hopkins 6–7:30 p.m.		23	Winnsboro Consortium Fairfield County Parenting Center 104 Old Camden Road, Winnsboro 6–7:30 p.m.
	24	Appreciation of Mothers Fairfield County Parenting Center 104 Old Camden Road, Winnsboro 6–7:30 p.m.	July	21	Tips for Employment Search Eastover Recreational Center 1031 Main Street, Eastover 6–7:30 p.m.
June	26	Appreciation of Mothers Pinehurst Park, 2300 Pinehurst Road, Columbia 6–7:30 p.m.		26	Tips for Employment Search Fairfield County Parenting Center 104 Old Camden Road, Winnsboro 6–7:30 p.m.
	16	Appreciation of Fathers Columbiana Ridge Apartments, 401 Columbiana Drive, Columbia 6–7:30 p.m.		28	Tips for Employment Search Pinehurst Park, 2300 Pinehurst Road, Columbia 6–7:30 p.m.

Return Service Requested

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