

# A HEALTHY CAMP BEGINS AND ENDS AT HOME!

*A healthy camp really does start at home.*

*Here are some actions you can take to help your child have a great camp experience.*

1. **If your Scout is sick, stay at home** - If your child is showing signs of illness such as running a temperature, throwing up, has diarrhea, nasal drainage and/or coughing/sneezing, keep the child home and contact your Scout leader or camp director. This reduces the spread of illness at camp and supports your child's recovery. Know your camp's policy about illness and camp attendance.
2. **A Scout is clean** - Teach your child to sneeze/cough in his/her sleeve and to wash his/her hands often while at camp, especially before eating and after toileting. If you really want to achieve impact, teach your child to accompany hand washing with another behavior: keeping their hands away from their face.
3. **Let us know how we can support your Scout's health needs** - If your child has mental, emotional, or social health challenges, talk with a camp representative before camp starts. Proactively discussing a camp's ability to accommodate a child can help minimize – if not eliminate – potential problems.
4. **Inform us of any unique nutritional needs ahead of time** - Should your child need a particular nutrition plan because of allergies, intolerances or a diagnosis (e.g., diabetes), note these on the Health History form but also contact the camp to make sure (a) they have noted that need and (b) the camp can address it. Discuss how your child will receive appropriate meals and snacks then explain that to your camper. Should your child be uncomfortable with the plan, arrange for a camp staff member to assist/monitor the process until the child is comfortable.
5. **Pack closed toed shoes** - Make sure your Scout has and wears appropriate closed toed shoes for activities such as soccer and hiking, and that your child understands that camp is a more rugged environment than home. Talk with your child about wearing appropriate shoes to avoid slips, trips and falls that, in turn, can result in injuries such as sprained ankles.
6. **Dress in layers** - Send enough clothes so your child can dress in layers. Mornings can be chilly and afternoons get quite warm. Dressing in layers allows your child to remove clothing as s/he warms while still enjoying camp.
7. **Be well rested before and during camp** - Fatigue plays a part in both injuries and illnesses – and camp is a very busy place! If your child is going to a day camp, be sure they get enough rest at night. If the child will be at a resident camp, explain that camp is not like a sleepover; they need to sleep, not stay up all night!
8. **"Be Prepared" for sun protection** - Remember to send sunscreen appropriate to the camp's geographic location and that your child has tried at home. Teach your child how to apply his/her sunscreen and how often to do so.
9. **Bring a reusable water bottle** - Instruct your child to use it and refill it frequently during their camp stay. Staying hydrated is important to a healthy camp experience, something your child can assess by noting the color of their urine ("pee"); go for light yellow.
10. **Help your Scout understand who to talk to if they have a concern** - Talk with your child about telling their unit leaders, the Troop Health Officer, the nurse, or camp director about anything that is troublesome for them at camp. These leaders can be quite helpful as children learn to handle being lonesome for home or cope with things such as losing something special. These helpers can't be helpful if they don't know about the problem – so talk to them.
11. **Let us know how we can help** - Should something come up during the camp experience or afterward – you see an unusual rash on your Scout – contact the camp's representative and let them know. Camps want to partner effectively with parents; sharing information makes this possible.