

A terror in the night...

Some things don't have to be so scary!

Halloween Safety Tips

Team Spotlight

Looking for alternatives to hand out this Halloween? Try some of these candy free Trick-or-Treat ideas!

- 100% Juice Boxes
- Fruit Leather
- Mini pretzel bags
- Granola Bars
- Boxes of raisins
- Travel size packs of dried veggie chips
- Trail mix
- Snack size packages of popcorn
- Boxes of crayons
- Stickers
- Bouncy balls
- Yo-yos
- Slinky



October 2011

Scared Silly!

Caring Well

Middleton Pediatrics would like to invite you to an evening discussion on "Talk Time" on Thursday, November 17th. Dr. Middleton and Shannon Osborn, a speech therapist with Talk Time Speech and Language Services, Inc., will be conducting the time from 6:00pm to 7:30pm.

This is the fourth discussion on a series of talks entitled "CARING WELL-A Curriculum for parenting and pediatric health that goes beyond simply not being sick".

Topics will include:

- Normal speech development by age
- How to recognize warning signs for speech and language problems
- Strategies that parents can do to facilitate healthy speech and language development

Space is fairly limited, so if you are interested, please respond to our Family Care Coordinator, Kelli Coon, at kelli@middletonpediatrics.com or (407) 284-6460.

A terror in the night...

Your child goes to sleep at 8:00pm, and three hours later jolts awake, crying, screaming, and breathing heavily. Despite your efforts to calm him down he continues to act upset until he finally returns to sleep. The next morning the child has no memory of the event, and everything seems to be normal. So was it a nightmare? What about a night terror?

Nightmares are scary dreams that awaken the child, and are often presented by a crying and scared child who is awake and will remember the dream. Night terrors are disruptions in sleep, which are similar to a nightmare, although they can be much more dramatic. They occur during the transition of sleep cycles (about 2-3 hours after the child goes to bed), and are caused by the over arousal of the central nervous system during sleep. The CNS regulates sleep and waking brain activity, and it is thought that night terrors occur because the CNS is still maturing. Most of the time night terrors cease on their own when the nervous system is more developed.

Night terrors are often inherited, and are noted in kids who are:

- Overtired or ill, stressed, or fatigued
- Taking new medication
- Sleeping in a new environment
- Fever
- Usually between ages 1-8.
- Somewhat more common in boys

Common symptoms of night terrors include:

- Sitting upright in bed
- Shouting/screaming
- Heavy/fast breathing
- Heavy heartbeat
- May sweat, thrash, act upset/scared
- No memory of night terror
- After a few minutes child will call down and return to sleep

The best way to handle a night terror is to wait it out and make sure the child does not get hurt if he is thrashing. The child will normally return to sleep on his own, and it is best not to wake him (often the child will become confused, disoriented, and take longer to fall back asleep). To help prevent night terrors it is important to establish and stick to a bedtime routine that is simple and relaxing. Make sure your child gets enough rest and isn't overly stressed.

Knowing what to expect with night terrors, and being able to differentiate between night terrors and nightmares is important to ease a parent's mind. However, talk with your pediatrician if your child repeatedly has night terrors or you have other concerns about your child's sleep.

www.kidshealth.org/parent/growth/sleep/terrors.html

Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars and change the world.

~Harriet Tubman

SOME THINGS DON'T HAVE TO BE SO SCARY!

Scary vs Serious

Like haunted houses and ghost stories, some things in life scare us more than they really should. A great example is flying on airplanes. Many people are quite afraid of flying despite the facts showing that it is an extremely safe form of travel. Other examples include snakes, shark attacks, spiders, heights. All of these cause a degree of fear that exceeds the reality of the situation.

The opposite can also be true, i.e. some things are really serious and probably should scare us more than they do. Texting while driving (or, for that matter, doing anything that distracts us when driving) should scare us to the point of never doing it, yet so many do and the results are devastating.

This relationship between scary and serious exists in medicine as well. For example, croup is an illness that tends to be far scarier than it is serious. Children with croup will appear to their parents to be in danger of losing their ability to breathe, but rarely is this really the case. On the other hand, asthma is potentially a very serious illness that is often not regarded as such, thus resulting in many patients not taking their prescribed medications as they should. Patients with asthma (and parents of children with asthma) should have a healthy fear of the condition.

Along these lines, influenza is an illness that should probably create more fear in us than it typically does.

Influenza 1918

The scariest time of illness in our nation's history is likely the Flu pandemic of 1918. This illness killed 675,000 Americans (and 50 million people worldwide) in a matter of a couple of months. The rapidity with which it spread was and still is unprecedented. Strangely, this event in our history is rarely ever mentioned, despite the fact that it killed more Americans than all 20th century wars combined (and did so in a remarkably short period of time). Another aspect of this influenza episode was that it tended to affect young, healthy people (as opposed to typical influenza strains that usually affect the elderly and very young). For a fascinating (and frightening) account of this forgotten time in our history, see <http://virus.stanford.edu/uda/>.

H1N1 2009

More recently, we experienced another influenza pandemic. In 2009, there were approximately one million cases of H1N1 influenza in the United States. Thankfully, the mortality from this strain of flu was far less than what was feared; however the amount of illness was a sharp rise above typical influenza seasons.

Yearly Influenza

Even in years in which there is no pandemic, influenza is an illness that should cause a healthy fear. Over the last decade, an average of 36,000 influenza-related deaths occurs each year (the total actually varies significantly from year to year). The range of severity from influenza can be anywhere from mild (even asymptomatic) illness to death. Children and those with chronic illness (e.g. Asthma, diabetes) are considered to be at increased risk for severe illness.

Sometimes at Halloween we enjoy being scared, mainly because we know it isn't serious. But this is also the time of year for influenza, and the facts would suggest that we should be scared precisely because it is potentially so serious. Thankfully, we don't need to be as scared because of the ability to be protected through vaccination. If you have not received your yearly influenza vaccine, contact our office to schedule a time to do so.

Halloween Safety Tips

Halloween is a fun time to dress in costumes, go trick-or-treating, attend parties, and eat yummy treats. The excitement at this time of the year can sometimes make parents and children less careful than they would be normally. There are lots of simple ways to keep your child safe at Halloween, when accidents and injuries are more likely to occur. Just remember to have a **SAFE HALLOWEEN**.

Swords, knives, and other costume accessories should be short, soft, and flexible.

Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups or with a trusted adult.

Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see you.

Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating them.

Hold a flashlight while trick-or-treating to help you see and others see you

Always test make-up in a small area first. Remove it before bedtime to prevent skin and eye irritation.

Look both ways before crossing the street. Use established crosswalks whenever possible.

Limit the amount of treats you eat. Eat a healthy dinner before trick-or-treating so you won't be hungry.

Only walk on sidewalks or on the far edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe.

Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls.

Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats unless you know the cook well.

Enter homes only if you're with a trusted adult and know the family. Otherwise, stay outside.

Never walk near lit candles or luminaries. Be sure to wear flame-resistant costumes.

www.cdc.gov/family/halloween

Team Spotlight: Christine May



Hometown: Scotia, NY

Children: Amelia ("Mia") 6 months

Education: West Virginia University

Favorite Food: Ice Cream

Favorite Vacation Destination: San Francisco/Napa Valley

Favorite Sweet: Starbucks Salted Caramel Mocha

Favorite Movie: Miss Congeniality and PS I Love You

Hobbies: Soccer, yoga, spending time with my husband and daughter!

Favorite Book: Harry Potter Series

Favorite Restaurant: Sushi Pop

The best thing about Middleton Pediatrics: "I have enjoyed working in pediatrics for years, but didn't realize how much fun work can be until I joined the Middleton Pediatrics team. I am so lucky to come to work every day and see my smiling coworkers and the sweet families we serve!"

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