

HEALTHY CHOICES

Latest tips on the art of living well.

ISSUE: 21 2014

Growing Healthy Children



Kids give little regard to hygiene, resulting in them having an increased exposure to bacteria and viruses.



Kids, they get into everything.

Whether they're hard at play in the mud outside, helping the dog with his dinner or sharing toys with friends, kids give little regard to hygiene, resulting in them having an increased exposure to bacteria and viruses.

This tactile nature of children is important for their learning and development, but how do you guard against the increased risk of germs?

In a time of excess allergies people are now questioning whether the plethora of antibacterial products is in part to blame for this - based on the hygiene hypothesis - which in short is the theory that by killing all bacteria we are left with a sterile environment and fail to develop natural immunity to everyday bugs. By now most people are also clued up to the fact that antibiotic medicines should only be used when absolutely necessary; reliance on antibiotics can not only lead to antibiotic resistance (where the medications are no longer effective at treating

infection), but they also disrupt the delicate balance of intestinal microflora.

So, if not through the abundant use of antibacterial cleaners and antibiotics, how do you guard against the increased risk of germs? Simple, you support the development of a healthy, robust immune system.

Children are born with a certain level of immunity called 'innate' or 'non-specific' immunity that prevents the entry of bacteria into the body by providing generic protection such as mucous membrane barriers, inflammation mechanisms and of course white blood cell activity. But their 'acquired' or 'specific' immunity which creates a memory of a bacteria or virus so it can fight it off if it's encountered again (the theory behind vaccinations) requires children to be exposed to bacteria and viruses so they can build up their specific immunity.

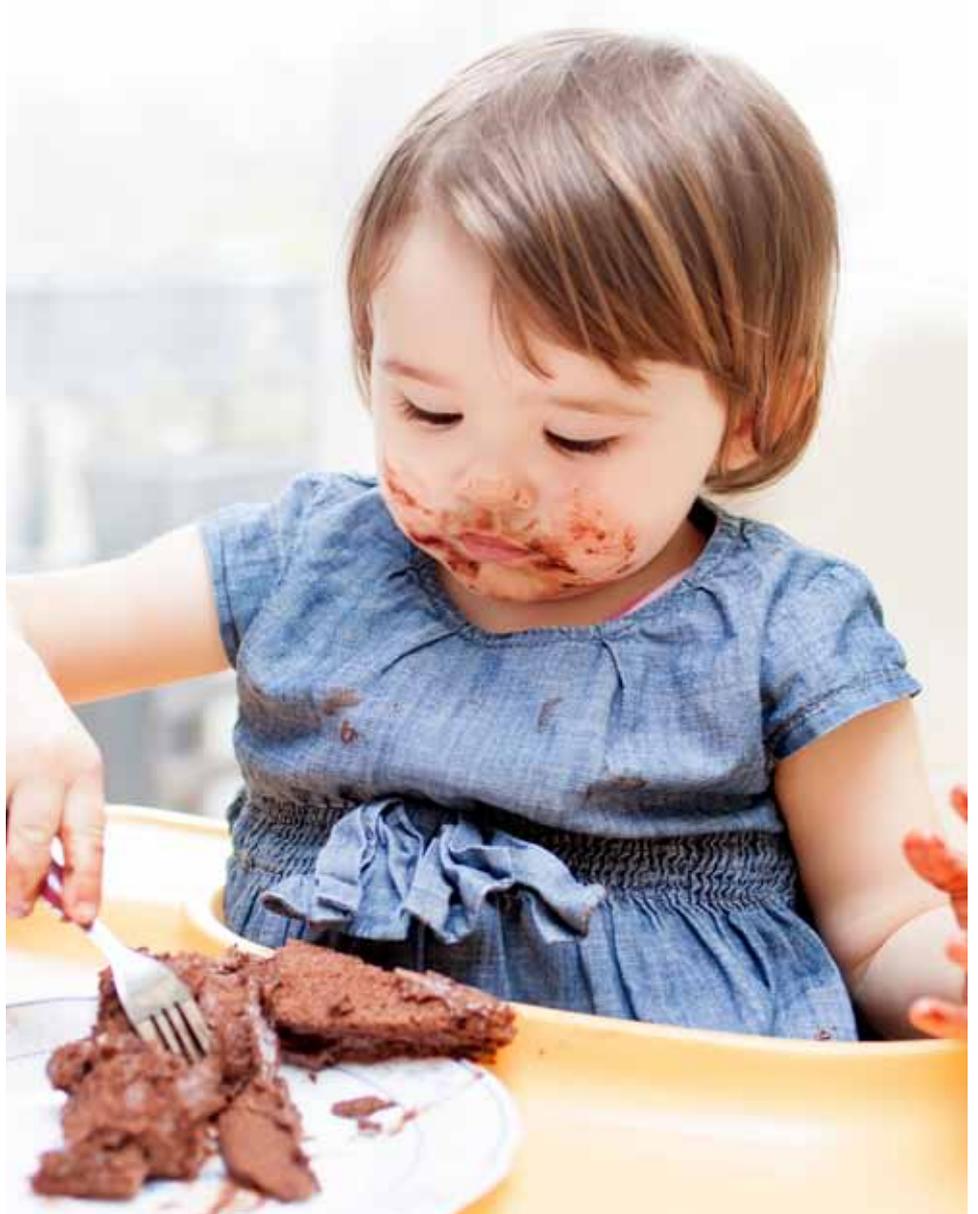
Because the immune system in humans doesn't fully develop until around the age of 7 or 8 years of age we need to look at what

we can do to support them during these formative years. The key factors to raising healthy children and helping them to build strong immunity are making sure they eat a healthy diet, get plenty of fresh air, sunshine, exercise and sleep. Of course there will always be times when your child is faced with additional challenges and sometimes their immune system doesn't seem to be able to keep up. It is in these situations, or if you can foretell them, the lead up to these situations, that additional support in the form of supplements may be helpful.

Many people may argue that children shouldn't require nutritional supplements. This would indeed be true if kids ate a varied healthy diet with lots of vegetables, if they went to bed on time and if they played outside more; but sadly this is not the world our kids live in. In saying that, if you do decide to give your children supplements it is imperative that you understand the way the supplement you choose will work and what specific benefit it will bring to your child. As adults we tend to take all manner of supplements to relieve our achy joints, restore our hormone balance, give us more energy, reduce the signs of ageing and so on. Most of the time kids don't need such supplements; they're young, agile and heal quickly. But there is one supplement that stands out for children – bovine colostrum.

Colostrum is something that many children will have received if they were breastfed as babies. Though the timing and source may have changed, bovine colostrum is a natural whole food that is not foreign to our body, making it safe for our children to take. The key benefits of colostrum supplements are the presence of growth factors that can support gut health, immune factors that support healthy immunity and the ability to provide digestive comfort – making it an ideal substance to help your children to cope with the constant immune challenges they face on a daily basis.

Above all else remember, kids need to be kids. Encourage them to study, eat well, exercise regularly and take a supplement if need be, but let them play, explore, learn and grow in their own way.



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