

SUMMER 2010

Carolinas

kids

◀ A PUBLICATION OF LEVINE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL ▶

Joining
forces
to cure
childhood
cancer

FIRST-CLASS
HEART CARE

THE SOUR TRUTH
ABOUT
SWEETENED
DRINKS

Levine
 Children's
Hospital

Our world revolves around children.

>> Parents' pages

Skip the weekend wake-up call

Before you rouse your child from his or her late weekend slumber, consider this: While not getting enough sleep has been linked to weight problems, researchers in Hong Kong found that kids who slept less than eight hours a night on weekdays but slept in on weekends and holidays weren't overweight or obese. This study of more than 5,000 children is the first to show children who compensated for lost sleep on their days off were less likely to be overweight than their peers



FAST FACT...

Kids and teens spend 7 hours and 38 minutes a day in front of the TV, computer or other media. —Kaiser Family Foundation

who didn't sleep in. "Ideally, kids should get at least nine-and-a-half hours of sleep a night," says Michael Zgoda, MD, a physician with University Pulmonary Associates who is board certified in sleep medicine. ■

Food allergies on the rise

The number of kids who were treated for food allergies rose 18 percent between 1997 and 2007. Whether this represents an actual increase or is simply the result of people knowing more about food allergies and seeking treatment is unknown. But healthcare providers report the number of children seeking treatment in emergency rooms for allergy-related symptoms has tripled since 1993, and about 4 percent of all children are reported to have food or digestive allergies. Food allergies can be life-threatening for children.



"Common culprits include peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, soy, shellfish, fish and wheat," says Janelle White, MD, with University Pediatrics. "If you think your child has a food allergy, talk with your pediatrician." ■

Protect against Hib

Check your child's immunization records to make sure he or she is up to date on *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) shots. The vaccine is given to babies in multiple doses by age 6 months, with a booster shot between 12 and 15 months. But in 2007 the Hib vaccine supply dropped, so the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommended that only kids with health problems and those not previously vaccinated get the booster. Thankfully, supplies are back up and all children can receive their booster shots. Ask your pediatrician if your child is up to date on the vaccine. Hib can cause serious infections including meningitis and pneumonia. ■

CERTIFICATE OF IMMUNIZATION



>> Moms want to know ...

How can I ease my child's ear pain when we fly?

Here's the science lesson: Air travel is sometimes associated with rapid changes in air pressure. Adult ears are able to equalize this pressure pretty well (the popping you may experience is evidence of your ears adjusting to it). But children's ears are less adept at doing this (kids may also experience pain because of a brewing ear infection). To keep pain to a minimum, your child should:

- **Drink plenty of water.** It

forces a child to swallow, which opens up the eustachian tubes (they connect the ear to the throat).

- **Take acetaminophen or ibuprofen** half an hour before takeoff or before landing.
- **Chew gum or suck on hard candy** (if your child is older than age 3).
- **Bottle-feed, breastfeed or suck on a pacifier.**
- **Yawn frequently.**
- **Stay awake during takeoff and landing** (kids' ears can stabilize air pressure better when they're awake). ■

>> Milestones

When to start sports

Playing sports can be a lot of fun for your child and a great boon for his or her self-esteem. It can also offer lessons about playing fair and being a member of a team and help him or her make friends and stay active. Still, not every sport may be suitable for your child.

Up to about age 5, when children are still perfecting the most basic of movements, you may want to

stick to simple playtime (running, climbing monkey bars, tumbling on mats, dancing, playing catch with a squishy ball or learning to ride a tricycle) rather than organized sports. Once your child is 6 years old, you can think about more organized activities like softball, soccer, gymnastics, swimming and karate. Most sports are acceptable for children ages 8 and older.

You should also consider how expensive the sport

is, whether there's a lot of physical contact (and more risk for injury) and whether every child has a chance to participate. Most important, make sure your child actually wants to play. Sports are supposed to be fun, not a chore! ■





A BRIGHT FUTURE: Ronna Gray (left) and her daughter Darien, a patient at Levine Children's Hospital, celebrate the announcement of the Carolinas Kids Cancer Research Coalition with Javier Oesterheld, MD.

Bringing hope and a cure to children with cancer

Part of being a parent is worrying whether you are doing all you can to help your child be happy and healthy.

Those everyday fears range from wondering if your child is eating enough vegetables to whether it's safe to let him or her swim in a neighbor's pool. Those fears are nothing compared to the feeling parents have when they hear the words, "Your child has cancer." As the incidence of childhood cancers

continues to rise, with cancer remaining a leading cause of death, many parents wonder, "What if my child is next?"

Now, thanks to the generous donations of eight local philanthropic organizations and families, parents have a place where their child can receive world-class cancer treatment right in their backyard. Levine Children's Hospital recently announced the formation of the Carolinas Kids Cancer Research Coalition, providing funds for the introduction of Phase I and Phase II clinical trials.

Strength in numbers

Coalition support includes a \$1 million commitment from the Alex Hemby Foundation

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The information contained in this publication is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice. If you have medical concerns, please consult your healthcare provider.

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We need your support!



>> To learn more about pediatric clinical trials at Levine Children's Hospital or to donate, visit www.levinechildrenshospital.org.

and the Hemby family, resulting in the naming of the Pediatric Hematology and Oncology Center in honor of Torrence E. Hemby Jr. and the creation of an endowed fund in his honor. Consistent with other commitments from Coalition members, the Hemby gift is being matched by The Leon Levine Foundation, for total Coalition funding in the amount of \$5.7 million. Other founding members of the Coalition include the Adam Faulk Tanksley Foundation, the Baby J Ladley Fund, the Quail Hollow Championship, drumSTRONG™, 24 Hours of Booty and Brett's Ride for Rhabdo.

“The needs of our children and families today transcend the resources of any single organization; it’s been gratifying to see how these founding members have rallied around a common goal,” says Bevie Hemby, speaking on behalf of the Alex Hemby Foundation and the Hemby family. “We’re excited to keep children and families together in Charlotte as they benefit from access to the most current research and clinical therapies.”

Funding will be used to expand staff, diagnostic and treatment equipment and support services for Phase I and Phase II clinical trials. These trials test the safety, effectiveness and best approaches for the use of new drugs and other inventions to fight cancer. Research at the center will focus on leukemia, lymphoma, neuroblastoma, brain tumors, kidney cancer and other bone and soft-tissue tumors.

One-of-a-kind cancer care

Pediatric patients will have access to a broad range of clinical research studies, including National Cancer Institute protocols for therapies under development. The center has participated in more than 60 clinical trials through the internationally recognized Children’s Oncology Group, a collaborative initiative including patients, researchers and hospitals worldwide.

These new clinical trial capabilities are quickly drawing local attention, with four patients already enrolled. One patient is responding quite well to treatment.

“Having Phase I and Phase II clinical trials at Levine Children’s Hospital will greatly help patients and their families, since no other institution in the

Founding coalition members

THE LEON LEVINE FOUNDATION



THE TORRENCE E. HEMBY, JR.
PEDIATRIC
Hematology and Oncology Center
at Levine Children’s Hospital



QUAIL HOLLOW
CHAMPIONSHIP



BABY J LADLEY
*Pediatric Brain Tumor
Research Fund*

24 hours of booty

Join us!

Join the Carolinas Kids Cancer Research Coalition and participate in one of the events taking place to raise funds in the fight against childhood cancers.

>> drumSTRONG

When: Saturday, May 15 (starts at noon) through Sunday, May 16 (ends at 5 p.m.)

Where: Misty Meadows Farm

>> Adam Faulk Tanksley Foundation Golf Classic

When: Friday, June 18

Where: Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge

>> 24 Hours of Booty

When: Saturday, July 24 and Sunday, July 25

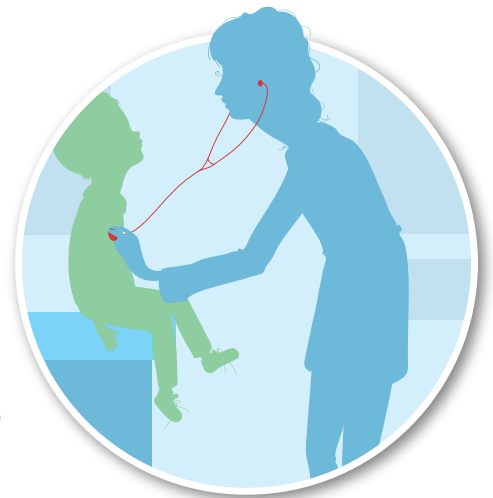
Where: Myers Park (Queens University)

Visit www.lchchildrensfund.org for more information about these and other events.

region is offering them,” says Javier Oesterheld, MD, director of the developmental therapeutics program at the Pediatric Hematology and Oncology Center. “Our goal is to become a destination for children, both regionally and beyond.” ■

Setting the pace in cardiac care

Comprehensive heart center offers advanced therapies for kids



Benjamin Peeler,
MD, FACS

The successful treatment of congenital heart disease is one of the great stories of modern medicine. Today, many of these advances are being used to help children born with complex congenital

heart conditions. “Kids who once had a very limited outlook can now grow up to be thriving adults,” says Benjamin Peeler, MD, FACS, chief of pediatric and adult congenital cardiac surgery and co-director of the Congenital Heart Center at Levine Children’s Hospital (LCH). “The vast majority of children we treat go on to lead active lives. That’s our No. 1 goal.”

A highly specialized team

Children receive care from a team of cardiologists and cardiac surgeons, many of whom joined

LCH from other well-known institutions across the United States. “Our experts treat conditions such as heart murmurs, arrhythmias and structural abnormalities of the chest,” says Larry Watts, MD, FACS, a longtime member of the team at LCH. Dr. Watts has special interest in and vast experience with anomalies of the coronary arteries and heart valve repair.

Hypoplastic left heart syndrome, or HLHS, one of the most complex conditions seen in young children, is usually fatal unless treated within the first days or weeks of life. It occurs when structures on the left side of the heart, including valves and the aorta, are too small to support blood circulation. HLHS has been an area of focus for Dr. Peeler, who recently moved to LCH from the University of Virginia, where he was the head of pediatric cardiac surgery. “An operation called the Norwood procedure has dramatically changed the prognosis for HLHS patients,” says Dr. Peeler.

“It’s gratifying to be part of a team that provides the highest level of cardiac care to children,” he adds. ■

Leading-edge care for little hearts

The Congenital Heart Center at Levine Children’s Hospital is one of the only centers in North Carolina to offer pediatric heart transplants. We have the first dedicated pediatric cardiovascular intensive care unit in the state. Nurses and respiratory therapists in this ICU are specially trained to handle even the most serious heart conditions. A mobile heart-lung machine, known as ECMO, is also available for patients.

A gift from the heart

In appreciation of the gracious philanthropic support of the Tansukh V. Ganatra family, including current gifts and pledges totaling more than \$420,000, Levine Children’s Hospital has established the Ganatra Initiative for Excellence in Children’s Heart Care. This initiative is vital to promoting excellence in pediatric heart-related programs and services at the hospital.



Pour with caution

Sweet beverages can sour your child's health

You give your child a glass of juice at breakfast and another one at snacktime, a bottle of iced tea at lunch and an on-the-run dinner comes with soda. Without taking one bite of food, your child has consumed 600 calories. "For some, these calories take the place of healthy foods," says Kit Henry, MD, with Pediatric Associates.

Sweetened drinks have come under close scrutiny in recent years, as childhood obesity rates have spiraled out of control. Weight problems set our kids up for high cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes down the road.

The bitter truth

Drinks such as soda and fruit juice are a major source of added sugar in children's diets. The main ingredient in many of these drinks is high fructose

corn syrup. What's so bad about a little sweetener? Consider these concerns:

- >> Each can of soda consumed daily has been linked to a 60 percent increase in obesity risk.
- >> Up to 85 percent of school-age children drink at least one soda a day.
- >> Sugary drinks may take the place of milk in children's diets, leading to low calcium levels and an increased risk of bone fractures—not to mention what they can do to teeth.

The solution? Give your child plenty of water and nonfat milk, and when you do allow juice, dilute it with water. ■



FAST FACT...

A can of soda contains the equivalent of 10 teaspoons of sugar.

House calls

Q Is the family dog causing my daughter's asthma symptoms?

A Possibly! At least one third of people with asthma have pet allergies, which can make it difficult to manage asthma. If you're not sure whether your daughter has allergies, her pediatrician

may recommend seeing an allergist for testing. If she is allergic, the best way to stop symptoms is to remove the dog from the home. If that's too emotionally difficult, talk to her doctor about managing symptoms with allergy

medications and air purifiers and getting rid of upholstered furniture and carpeting. If you have to get rid of your dog, make sure your child knows it's not her fault. ■



Meghan Jackson, MD,
Pediatric Associates
704-512-4475





Lifesaving procedure available in Charlotte



MEET THE CFCC TEAM: (l-r) Andrew Schuller, RDMS; Monica Roush, RN, RDMS; Albert Franco, MD, FACOG; Courtney D. Stephenson, DO, FACOG; Jessica P. Hooks, MS, CGC; and Emili Raine, RN, BSN

The Charlotte Fetal Care Center (CFCC) opened recently on the campus of Carolinas Medical Center. The maternal-fetal medicine care team offers comprehensive care, including in-utero and other highly specialized treatments.

Courtney D. Stephenson, DO, FACOG, director of the center, brings an exciting new procedure to the region called fetoscopic laser ablation, which

can help unborn twins who have twin-twin transfusion syndrome (TTTS), a potentially life-threatening condition.

The center has access to a Level III labor and delivery unit at CMC and a Level IV neonatal intensive care unit at Levine Children's Hospital. To learn more about TTTS and the CFCC, visit www.charlottefetalcare.org. ■



Coming soon! Urgent care for children

We're opening a Children's Urgent Care, in association with Levine Children's Hospital, at 231 S. Sharon Amity Road across from Cotswold Village Shops. Opening in July, the facility will have a board-certified pediatrician on staff and a warm, friendly atmosphere that's been created with kids in mind. Watch for more information coming soon at www.levinechildrenshospital.org about this new service for children and their parents! ■