

Mindfulness Can Reduce School Anxiety in Kids

From Duke Medicine

Starting a new school year can be a real stressor for kids, and they don't always know how to deal with it. Learning to be mindful can help.

"Making a transition, whether it's to a new school, a new teacher or a new grade, signals change," says Michelle Bailey, MD, a pediatrician at Duke Integrative Medicine.

"And any time we go through change it can generate feelings of resistance, fear, and anxiety."

Mindfulness is a form of meditation that improves a person's ability to pay attention to what's happening in the present moment. It's already proven useful for reducing stress in adults, boosting the immune system and lowering blood pressure. Kids can benefit from mindfulness, too. Dr. Bailey says research shows it can help kids reduce anxiety and improve their ability to pay attention and stay focused. It may lessen aggression in kids, as well.

"Mindfulness helps kids recognize their thoughts, reconnect with their emotions, and understand how that impacts their behavior," she explains. "Ultimately, if we can heighten awareness of our thoughts, we can modify our emotions and that changes behavior."

Truly learning mindfulness techniques takes training that is offered through mindfulness-based stress reduction programs available at clinics and hospitals like Duke across the country. To get started, however, try these exercises:

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Dear Reader,

In this issue of the Health Update, we bring you tips from the WorldCare Consortium hospitals on reducing school-related stress for kids, and on the health benefits of olive oil. You'll also learn about a new study on cancer treatment from a top cancer institute.

Sincerely,

*Rebika Shaw,
Regional Director, Corporate Communications*

HEALTH NEWS

Standard Chemo Seems Better Than Capecitabine in Older Breast Cancer Patients

From the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

Standard chemotherapy is more effective than an oral drug, capecitabine, following surgery in older women with early breast cancer, according to a study co-led by Dana-Farber researchers.

In a clinical trial involving 633 patients, the investigators found that two and a half years after beginning the trial, women who had received capecitabine were twice as likely to have a relapse or die as those who received standard chemotherapy.

"Because standard chemotherapy agents are administered intravenously and patients often prefer oral agents, we wanted to compare the effectiveness of a proven oral drug with standard chemotherapy regimens in this group," says Eric Winer, MD, director of the Breast Oncology Center and the senior author of the study.

Patients enrolled in the study had small breast tumors that could be removed by surgery. Participants were randomly assigned to groups that received either standard chemotherapy – with a combination of two or three intravenously administered drugs – or capecitabine following surgery.

After two and a half years, 20 percent of the patients who received capecitabine had relapsed, compared to 11 percent of those on standard chemotherapy. Twelve percent of the capecitabine patients had died, compared to 7 percent in the other group. At three years, 68 percent of those in the capecitabine group were alive without a cancer relapse, compared to 85 percent in the other group. The results were reported in the May 14 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.



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Mindfulness (continued)

Mindful breathing. Once in the morning and once in the evening, ask your child to pay attention to their breath for 20 inhales and exhales. Challenge them to “notice how your breath moves in and out,” counsels Bailey. “Feel how your chest expands and contracts.” Don’t try to change your breathing; simply observe. Breathing usually slows down because the practice triggers a relaxation response.

Mindful listening. Gather the family around the dinner table. Ring a bell or play a note on a musical instrument. Any sound that will capture and center the family’s attention will do. Have one child listen to the entire sound until it ends. Then, ask her to talk about her day. Everyone must give her their full attention. Take turns experiencing this form of active listening. Eventually, children can use this technique in their classroom too. “It helps children pay attention in class and be more mindful of what their teacher is saying,” Bailey says. Mastering the skill will help them notice when their mind is wandering and redirect their attention.

Mayo Clinic Dietitian Offers Highlights on Olive Oil

By Katherine Zeratsky, R.D., L.D.,
from Mayo Clinic

What are the health benefits of olive oil? Is extra-virgin oil better than regular olive oil?

When choosing fats, olive oil is a healthy choice. Olive oil contains monounsaturated fat, a healthier type of fat that can lower your risk of heart disease by reducing the total and low-density lipoprotein

NEWS ON WORLDCARE

WorldCare launches new telemedicine system. Genie, the new custom-designed telemedicine system, allows greater streamlining of WorldCare’s online case processing. Accessible from anywhere in the world, the web-based system also allows WorldCare’s worldwide telemedicine staff to collaborate online to provide a quick, seamless experience to WorldCare members.

Patient Perspective

“I was a little afraid to use this service in the beginning. Because my husband’s situation was so serious, I went ahead. I found all staff to be magnificently helpful and they guided me through the process. The reports were so informative and our family physician was impressed with the service which he had not been involved with before.”

WorldCare member T.M.

About WorldCare

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(LDL, or “bad”) cholesterol levels in your blood.

In contrast, saturated and trans fats – such as butter, animal fats, tropical oils and partially hydrogenated oils – increase your risk of heart disease by raising your total and LDL cholesterol levels.

According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), consuming about 2 tablespoons of olive oil a day may reduce your risk of heart

disease. You can get the most benefit by substituting olive oil for saturated fats rather than just adding more olive oil to your diet.

All types of olive oil contain monounsaturated fat, but “extra-virgin” or “virgin” olive oils are the least processed forms, so they’re the most heart-healthy. Those types contain the highest levels of polyphenols, a powerful antioxidant that also can promote heart health.



Contact your local WorldCare office if you are interested in obtaining a second opinion from a WorldCare Consortium hospital. Visit www.WorldCare.com for more information.