



## Allergies, Ticks, Safety and More ... Child Health Promotion Tips

*By Deborah Zeller, MSN, RN, National Certified School Nurse*

Spring is in the air and the children enjoy playing outdoors in sunny, warm weather! However, the change in seasons may cause health related concerns for some families. The first may be seasonal allergic rhinitis, or “hay fever,” which affects millions of Americans. If your children suffer from it, they may experience sneezing, stuffiness, a runny nose and itchiness in the nose, roof of the mouth, throat, eyes or ears. These allergic reactions are most commonly caused by pollen and mold spores in the air, which start a chain reaction in the body’s defense system. It can worsen conditions like eczema and asthma. To learn more about the best methods for reducing these symptoms, please read Dr. Pongdee’s [article](#) on seasonal allergic rhinitis. A second [article](#) by this allergy expert addresses medications that are effective in preventing the release of histamine.

Warm weather also means that ticks are more active and pose the risk of tick-borne illnesses. In Virginia, only the blacklegged tick carries and transmits Lyme disease. To learn more about how to prevent tick bites, identify ticks, safely remove them, and identify potential illness symptoms due to tick exposure, click [here](#). For facts about Lyme disease from the Virginia Department of Health click [here](#), or go to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website](#).

The most enjoyable parts of warm weather are the sports and water activities in the sun. For water and sun safety tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), click [here](#). Should you need information about the care of sunburn or insect bites, go the AAP’s symptom checker at [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org). If you are wondering about sports injuries and when to see the pediatrician, then click [here](#).

Finally, the spring and summer are the perfect time to schedule your children's regular developmental assessments/physical examinations to ensure that they are growing and developing in a satisfactory pattern. If you are wondering what the recommendations are for preventative pediatric care, click [here](#). Preventing communicable illness through age appropriate vaccination is very important. Parents often ask about the reasoning behind the way that immunizations are patterned. For those answers, click [here](#). You can also access evidence based articles on immunizations for parents as well as the immunization schedule [here](#). For details on Virginia's mandatory school health entrance and rising 6<sup>th</sup> grade student immunization requirements, see the health office information posted on the St. Andrew's [website](#).

