

Working with your school nurse

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(HealthDay)—Nearly 18 percent of kids have a chronic health condition, such as asthma or allergies. If your child is one of them, working successfully with your school's nurse will help keep him or her safe.

Because a good chunk of a child's day is spent in [school](#), it's important to communicate clearly and regularly with this key member of the administration.

Start every school year with a visit to the nurse's office to drop off medication and paperwork from your pediatrician. The nurse will likely develop an individualized health care plan, or IHCP, that's based on the doctor's written action plan. Depending on your child's age, the medication permission form will state if he or she can carry and use medication on his or her own, although the school may have its own rules about this.

Be very specific in your discussions. For example, if your child has asthma, the school needs to know how severe it is, what medication he or she takes, and what to do in an emergency.

With food allergies, provide a list of foods to be avoided along with doctor-recommended substitutions.

Signing a release at school and at the doctor's office lets you exchange all vital information. Double check that all the contact numbers the school has on file for you and your child's [health care providers](#) are correct.

Even if your child doesn't have a chronic condition, always bring any short-term illnesses that occur during the school year to the nurse's attention. Examples are an ear or throat infection, a rash and any injury that limits his or her activity.

If the [nurse](#) knows the situation, she can help your [child](#) get better as well as ease any concerns from other kids or their parents.

More information: The American Academy of Pediatrics has guidelines for working with [school nurses](#).

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