

What Nathan & His Friends Can Do



A Social Story about Staying Healthy

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Nathan is 4 ½ years old and goes to preschool. He knows a lot about the world. He is an expert about animals and building and dinosaurs. He learns things from people like his family and his teachers, from books and from the TV and the computer.



Nathan also knows a lot about human bodies. He knows that being healthy is important for learning and growing. He knows that to be healthy, it is important to eat a rainbow of fruits and vegetables. He knows that getting good sleep every night is important. He knows that when someone is sick, they should stay home and rest until they feel better (because that helps them get better and it also helps keep other people healthy by not sharing germs!



Nathan knows that there are lots of ways that bodies can get sick. Sometimes people get headaches. Sometimes they catch a cold and have stuffy noses and coughs. Sometimes people have to throw up or have ear infections. Sometimes people get the flu or another sickness like the chicken pox. He knows that people get better after being sick for a while.

Nathan also knows that there are lots of grown-ups who can help when people are sick. Doctors, nurses and other people who work in medical offices or hospitals know a lot about how to make people feel better. Grown-ups who take care of children also know what to do. Parents and other family members help children rest and get better. Teachers make sure that families know when children are not feeling well at school.



One day a nurse named Jose visited Nathan's preschool to help the children learn about staying healthy. Kumi, the teacher, told him that the children were learning about how to stay healthy. She said that they had been hearing about people getting sick and were curious to learn more.

Inviting an expert like Jose was one way they decided to learn some important information.



Jose brought books & stickers to share. He read the children a story about eating and talked about healthy foods. He asked what children knew about things they could do to avoid sharing germs and getting sick. Lots of Nathan's friends had ideas:

- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue
- Wipe your nose to get the mucus off your face and throw away the tissue
- Wash your hands with soap and make lots of bubbles
- Use your own cup, spoon and water bottle, don't share with other children
- Don't put toys in your mouth
- Tell a grown-up when you don't feel well
- Rest if you are sick--sleep is a good way to help you feel better
- Drink lots of water
- Take your medicine if you need it

Wow-Nathan's class knew a lot about being sick and getting healthy! Nurse Jose was impressed that they had so many ideas.

Jose told them that he had some more information to share so that they would be even more expert about staying healthy. He told them that germs are what make people get sick. Some germs are called viruses. A virus is like a teeny, tiny little bug that is so small we cannot see it. A virus can get into our bodies and make us sick. He said that viruses and other germs can come from lots of different places-and that they can live all over the place. We just cannot see them.

He said that if someone sneezes or coughs and does not cover their mouth, their germs can land anywhere nearby-on toys or phones or doorknobs. When we touch those things, the germs can get on to our hands. If we touch our faces, the viruses and germs can get into our bodies through our eyes, noses and mouths. He said he really liked that the kids in Nathan's class knew that they should cough or sneeze into their elbow. He reminded the children that after doing that they should always wash their hands.



He also liked their idea of coughing or sneezing into a tissue. He told them that is very important to then throw the tissue away in the garbage! Don't just put it on a table, we want to keep the germs and viruses away from where other people could touch them by accident. And then wash your hands!

Some kids in Nathan's class started getting worried when they heard about so many germs! Some had heard people talking about a virus with a long name-Corona virus. Some had seen people on TV talking about it. Some said their families were nervous about it.

They worried that since they could not see it, it might get into their bodies and make them sick. The nurse said not to worry, because there are grown-ups to help if children get sick, and because there are things children can do to stay as healthy as possible.



Jose reminded them of all their good ideas about staying healthy. He said that there is one really, really important tool to stay healthy.

Everyone wanted to know what it was. He said they already knew what it was! **HANDWASHING.**



He told them that people should wash their hands a lot-not just when they are worried about a virus, but every day. That helps everyone stay healthier. Jose said we should wash our hands

- Before and after we eat
- After we go to the bathroom
- When we arrive somewhere like school or someone's house
- After we sneeze, blow our noses or cough
- Before and after we visit someone who is sick
- When we are preparing food
- After touching an animal or animal food, and
- After touching garbage

That is a lot of hand washing! Nathan thought that there would not be any time left to play, but the Jose said there really is. He has to wash his hands a lot during the day and he still has time to work and visit schools. He told the class that the first thing he did when he got to their school was to go into the bathroom and wash his hands.



The nurse reminded Nathan's class about what hand washing really means, because lots of people forget sometimes and take short cuts. He said the only way to get all the germs and viruses is to follow these steps:

How to Wash Your Hands

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water. Turn off the water and put soap on your hands.
2. Rub your hands together to make lots of bubbles. Rub the front and back of your hands, in between your fingers and under your fingernails. Sing this song 3 times (to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”) to make sure you are rubbing long enough:



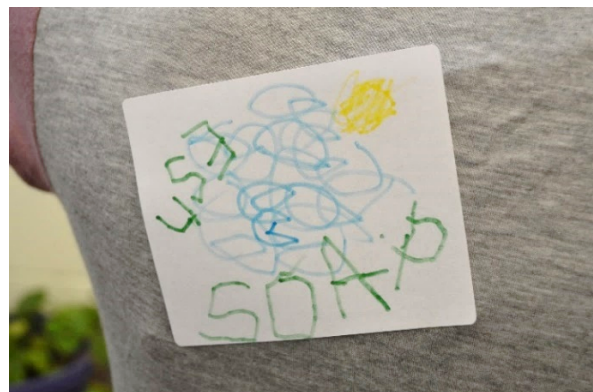
Rub, rub, rub your hands,
Scrub the germs away.
Front and back and every finger
All throughout the day.

3. Turn the water back on and rinse your hands to get all the bubbles off under running water.
4. Dry your hands using a clean towel.

Jose said that the most important thing is to scrub for at least 20 seconds, that is why he taught Nathan’s class the song.



Getting sick is no fun, but there are things everyone can do to stay healthy. Nathan and his school friends know a lot about things to do to help them keep germs away.



They decorated the stickers that Nurse Jose brought in to help teach other people about how to wash away germs and stay healthy. And now they know how to use the most important tool of all, handwashing!