

A Children's Health

Helping Children Hear, Breathe And Swallow Better

(NAPSA)—To help your children stay healthy, it may be wise to keep an eye on their ears, noses and throats. Children suffer from illnesses of the ear, nose and throat more than any other part of the body. In fact, otolaryngologists (ear, nose and throat specialists) report that:

- Children visit physicians because of ear infection more than for any other disorder.

- Improperly treated ear infections can lead to hearing loss.

- Hearing impairment and deafness are common postnatal developmental disabilities.

- Nearly 12 percent of American children suffer from respiratory allergies.

- More than seven million children were diagnosed with hay fever in 2001. (Hay fever, or allergic rhinitis, can lead to chronic sinusitis.)

- Some 42 percent of school-aged children may suffer from allergic rhinitis. It can cause interrupted sleep, increased fatigue, irritability, loss of concentration, itching and watery nose and eyes and sneezing and a blocked nose. On any given day, more than 10,000 children are absent from school due to allergic rhinitis.

If your child has been diagnosed with allergic rhinitis, there are a number of things you can do. Try to keep pets outside or confined to carpet-free areas outside the bedroom. Fully encase mattresses and pillows in semipermeable coverings to keep down dust mites. Replace the child's bedroom



Otolaryngologists (ear, nose and throat specialists) can help protect children from the most common childhood maladies.

curtains with shades or blinds. Every week, freeze stuffed toys for 24 hours and then wash them to kill dust mites. Don't smoke or allow smoking in the house. Use a spray furniture polish, air cleaner, and a vacuum cleaner with HEPA filters. Get rid of carpets and rugs. When the pollen count is high, keep the child indoors.

To help teach parents the importance of children's ear, nose and throat health, otolaryngologists started a public education campaign called Kids E.N.T. Health. In addition to giving pediatric health advice to parents, the program provides information on the diagnoses of ear, nose and throat disorders to other physicians and healthcare givers.

For more information on the program or to learn more about protecting your child's ear, nose and throat health, visit the Web site www.entnet.org/KidsENT.