Main Line HealthCare

Tips to Help Your Children "Weather" the Winter...

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With the seasons changing and temperatures dropping, here are a few tips to keep your children safe and warm this winter.

Winter Health:
Cold weather does not cause colds or flu, but the viruses that cause colds and flu are more common in winter. Frequent hand washing and teaching your child to sneeze or cough into her elbows may help reduce the risk of colds and flu. Be sure to check with your pediatrician if your child should receive the influenza vaccine. If your child suffers from nose bleeds, try using a cool mist humidifier at night. Saline drops may help keep tissues moist. If bleeding is severe or recurrent, consult your pediatrician.

What to Wear:
The rule of thumb for older babies and young children is to dress them in one more layer than an adult would wear in the same situation. Blankets and quilts should be kept out of an infant's sleeping environment as they may contribute to SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome). Sleep clothing, such as a one piece sleeper, is preferred.

Hypothermia & Frostbite:
Set reasonable time limits on outdoor play. Hypothermia develops when a child's temperature falls below normal due to exposure to cold. If you suspect hypothermia, call 911, take the child indoors, and wrap him in warm clothing. Frostbite happens most often on toes, fingers, ears, and the nose. Place the frost bitten part in warm (not hot) water. Do not rub the frozen areas.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics