

Muscles in Motion

This month in THE GREAT BODY SHOP, your child will be learning about muscles and exercise. Please reinforce the material studied in school by discussing the subject at home. The lessons are:

Lesson 1: A Look at Muscles

Lesson 2: Getting Exercise

Lesson 3: Muscles Work in Teams

Lesson 4: What Can Go Wrong

Check Out Those Muscles

The next time you prepare chicken for dinner, peel the skin off one of the drumsticks and let your child examine the muscle (i.e. the meat). Note that it is attached to the bone with tough, white, elastic fibers. These fibers are tendons.

Note the blood vessels running throughout the meat. Blood brings nutrients (food) and oxygen to the muscles. Explain that these two things are the fuel the muscles need to work.

Word Wise Vocabulary Words

Once your child has read THE GREAT BODY SHOP, have him/her try to finish these sentences. (answers below)

1. When a muscle gets tight and hurts, it is called a c ____ p.
2. Cold water can cause a muscle cramp. That is why we should never s ____ m alone.
3. Anything we do that uses our muscles and makes them work is called e ____ r ____ e.

Muscles Like to Work

Your child learned that muscles like to exercise. Exercise not only makes them stronger, it makes the whole body feel good!

Discuss different forms of exercise with your child. What does he/she like to do best? What kinds of exercise are possible where you live; i.e., is there a pool or skating rink or park in your neighborhood? What chores are also exercise (mowing the lawn, climbing up the stairs, sweeping or raking, etc.)?

All children—whether thin, heavy, or in-between—should have one hour or more of exercise every day. If your child does not, encourage more active play; you might start by buying a new ball or jump rope, by insisting that children play outside, or by suggesting games such as tag, hopscotch, or relay racing. And, since numerous studies have shown that there is a direct correlation between a child's fitness level and the hours of TV he/she watches, limiting television time would be a big help, too.

Read All About It

The Busy Body Book: A Kid's Guide to Fitness

by Lizzy Rockwell. Dragonfly Books, 2008.

Filled with kids busy on scooters and rollerblades, running, stretching, catching and throwing in the park. Includes clearly labeled diagrams with exciting scientific facts.

