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10 WAYS PARENTS CAN HELP THEIR CHILDREN MAINTAIN A HEALTHY LIVER.

- Avoid taking unnecessary medications. Too many chemicals can harm the liver.
 - Never mix medicines without the advise of a doctor. You may create a poisonous combination that can severely damage the liver.
 - Be careful when using aerosol cleaners. The liver detoxifies everything you breathe in, so make sure the room is well ventilated.
 - Watch what gets on their skin. Those insecticides you put on trees and shrubs to kill bugs can go through the skin and damage liver cells.
 - Teach your children what a syringe looks like and tell them to leave it alone. There is a one in 2000 chance of picking up the AIDS virus from a discarded needle used by a person with AIDS but if that person has hepatitis B, your chances of picking up the virus increases to one in four.
 - Lead by example and eat a well-balanced, nutritional adequate diet. Cut down on the amount of deep-fried and fatty foods you and your family consume. Doctors believe that the risk of gall bladder disorders- include gallstones, a liver related disease- can be reduced by avoiding high fat and cholesterol foods.
 - Minimize your consumption of smoked, cured and salted foods. Taste food before adding salt. Try alternative seasoning in your cooking such as, lemon juice, onion, vinegar, garlic, pepper, mustard, cloves, sage or thyme.
- Increase the amount of high fibre foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables and whole grain products in your family's diet. A high fibre diet is especially helpful in keeping the liver healthy.
- If you have emigrated from Africa, Southeast Asia, Mediterranean countries where Hepatitis affects up to 15% of the population, you should ask your doctor for a blood test to determine if you are a carrier.
- If anyone in your family has tested positive for hepatitis, ask for a blood test. If the test is negative, get vaccinated. A simple series of three vaccinations over six months will protect you against the virus for many years.

You can save lives! Register as an organ & tissue donor with OHIP. Visit your local OHIP office or download a donor form at www.giftoflife.on.ca Then discuss your wishes with your family.