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**HEALTHY YOU GUY KIDS**

**DO THIS RIGHT NOW:**  
Wipe down your dishwasher!

**Y**ou'd never think that a cleaning appliance could be so icky, but 62 percent of dishwashers in a recent study were contaminated with mold, yeast, and other types of fungi, which may trigger reactions like wheezing. The fix: Twice a week, clean the seal around the door with a disinfectant wipe—that's the area where fungi are less likely to be killed by detergents and high temps. —CHRISTINE RICHMOND

**MAN MEDICINE**

*I heard that men should no longer get the PSA blood test to screen for prostate cancer. Should I actually discourage my hubby from getting checked?*

Not necessarily. Here's the deal: The option for men to have a PSA (prostate-specific antigen) test begins around age 40. But after reviewing several large studies, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force issued a draft recommendation against using the test for men without symptoms, regardless of age—even those at high risk. Some types of prostate cancer are very slow-growing and unlikely to cause major health problems, and since the test can't identify which tumors are aggressive and which aren't, many men whose lives would not be affected are treated unnecessarily—which can be very painful and lead to incontinence and erectile dysfunction. Still, plenty of doctors feel the recommendations discouraging PSA testing go too far. Prostate-cancer deaths have dropped 40 percent since 1992, when the test debuted. Advocates say it's a vital test for those at high risk: African-Americans and men with a family history of the disease. So have your husband talk to his doctor about his personal risk factors. —JAMES MOHLER, M.D., CHAIR OF THE UROLOGY DEPARTMENT AT ROSWELL PARK CANCER INSTITUTE IN BUFFALO, NY

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**ASK THE DOCTORS**

**Q** Every five minutes, my kid is complaining that something hurts. Are there symptoms I shouldn't ignore?



**I**tell parents to pay attention to the pattern and progression of symptoms. If the occasional "Mom, my head hurts!" becomes something your child complains about every time you pick him up from school, make an appointment with the pediatrician. And there are a few gripes that should always ring an alarm for you: If your child pinpoints a sharp pain on his right or left side or underneath the rib cage and is running a fever, call your

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Before you trudge out to buy anything—*everything*—at the pharmacy in a last-ditch effort to head off the flu, check out the health-food store. Elderberry syrup contains antioxidants that can boost the immune system and weaken the flu, and may cut your feeling-sick time by up to four days, studies say. The key is to take 2 teaspoons four times per day at the first sign of symptoms, says **Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D.**, an internist in Kona, HI: "I've seen some patients recover in just 24 hours." He also suggests a one-two punch of elderberry syrup and zinc lozenges, which have shown similar virus-busting benefits. Sambucol and Nature's Way make elderberry syrup, tablets, and lozenges (find them at Whole Foods, health-food stores, or vitaminshoppe.com). —C.R.



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**A FLU REMEDY THAT'S BETTER THAN CHICKEN SOUP**

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doctor; it could be appendicitis. Also, ask him to jump up and down; if this dramatically worsens the pain, head straight to the ER. Another ER moment: If your kid mentions a crick in the back of his neck and has trouble touching his chin to his chest, it could be a sign of meningitis. If your child suddenly develops a limp for no apparent reason or is consistently bemoaning pain in an elbow—I'm not talking about soreness after a little roughhousing during soccer here—you could be dealing with a joint infection or, in rare cases, Lyme disease, which require prompt treatment. As for earaches and sore throats, I usually advocate monitoring them for a couple of days before rushing off for a prescription.



Jim Sears, M.D., is a board-certified pediatrician in Orange County, CA, and a cohost of *The Doctors*. Check your local listings for times.

Send your health questions to [askthedoctors@redbookmag.com](mailto:askthedoctors@redbookmag.com).

**Read this before you take another painkiller:**

Consider other drugs you're on whenever you take over-the-counter pain meds; they can interfere with everything from birth control pills to heart drugs. For example, taking an anti-inflammatory (like ibuprofen for cramps) over a 12-week period when you're also on antidepressants could slash the success rate of your mental health treatment by 25 percent, a study found. Check for drug interactions on prescription labels and speak with your doc about mixing meds. A few combos to look out for:

**Ibuprofen/naproxen + SSRIs, like Prozac**  
→ Reduced effectiveness of the antidepressant

**Ibuprofen/naproxen + birth control pills with drospirenone, like Yaz**  
→ Risk of dangerously high potassium levels

**Aspirin/ibuprofen/naproxen + blood pressure drugs**  
→ Risk of increased blood pressure —SARA WIGNERI

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