

A NEWSLETTER FROM

LAW OFFICES OF MATTHEW Z. MARTELL, P.A.

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Family Matters

When to Consider Temporary Custody by Grandparents

Parenting is a demanding enterprise. Parents have legal, moral, and practical responsibility for their children.

For a variety of reasons, parents can be temporarily unable to fulfill their responsibilities. Normally, when one parent is temporarily incapacitated, the other parent is entitled to assume custody of the children. But the other parent may also be unable or unwilling to assume the role of full-time parent.



During these periods, a reliable family member is needed to step up and

care for the children. A

[SEE 'GRANDPARENTS' ON PAGE 2](#)

grandparent is a natural choice

What makes a parent unfit?

Common examples include:

- The parent is addicted to alcohol or drugs and is incapable of caring for the child.
- The parent has abandoned the child.
- The parent has been physically or mentally abusing the child.
- The child is not being provided with the necessities of food, shelter, and clothing.

- The parent has left the child unattended for extended periods without checking on the child's welfare.
- The child has been tardy or absent from school for extended periods.
- The parent is providing an unsafe or unhygienic home.

When the parent or parents are unable to adequately care for the child or the child is in danger, the state child services may intervene. The state will likely place the child with a capable family member rather than in foster care.

If the grandparents know the parents are not capable of caring for the child or the child is in danger, they may file a petition seeking temporary custody. If they can substantiate their concerns in court, the court will likely grant temporary custody to the grandparents until the parents are rehabilitated and become capable of providing appropriate care for the child.

Points to Consider as a Parent

If you have considered or have been asked to consider placing custody of your child with a grandparent, or the



state is placing your child with a grandparent or other family member, ask yourself the following:

- Will temporary custody with a grandparent be in your child's best interest?
- If you are serving on a military assignment, do the grandparents support your enlistment and recognize that the custody order is temporary?
- Has the other parent maintained a relationship with the child? Is he or she capable of or interested in caring for the child? Would placement with the other parent be preferable to placement with a grandparent?
- Are you facing a jail or prison sentence? Is temporary custody with a grandparent in your child's best interests while you serve your sentence?
- Do you have a substance abuse problem? Does it interfere with your ability to parent your child?
- Have you left your child alone or unattended for any period?
- Has your child suffered an injury while in your care?
- Are you willing and able to attend a rehabilitation program? How long do you expect rehabilitation to take?
- Once you consent to temporary custody, will the grandparents support your rehabilitation to resume your role as a parent?
- Are you prepared to meet all requirements established by the department of family services if the department is involved in your case?
- Are you prepared to accomplish the goal of becoming a fit and capable parent to your child?
- Have you considered your legal obligation to contribute to the support of your child while in the temporary care of the grandparents?
- Do you have the financial wherewithal to pay child support to the grandparents?
- Are you still providing health insurance for the child? Or is that now grandparents' responsibility?
- Have you considered

incorporating a provision in the temporary custody order that specifies the type and frequency of telephone contact or visitation you may have with your child?

- Have you included or requested a clause in the temporary custody order that gives you the right to petition the court to terminate the order when you have become rehabilitated or are once again available?

Parting Thought

Temporary custody by a grandparent can be a blessing and in the best interest of the grandchild. Grandparents should seek competent legal representation when considering a petition for temporary custody of a grandchild. State laws vary widely and are legally complex. An experienced family law attorney can navigate through the code, regulations, and procedures to maximize your position in obtaining a grandparent temporary custody order. 

Illustrations by Storyset

Top 3 Ways to Strengthen Your Immune System

Your immune system is your body's first line of defense against illness. But as long as you're eating (fairly) healthy foods, the overall strength of your immunity to disease and infection is just a luck of the draw, right? Not so! There are ways to ensure your immune system is always functioning at optimum levels. Try tweaking your daily routine with these immune-boosting tips:

Vitamin D

In the US, an estimated 50% of the population is deficient in Vitamin D, while an estimated one billion people worldwide are deficient in this crucial nutrient. Much like plants, humans cannot properly survive without a sufficient amount of sunlight; numerous studies have shown that Vitamin D deficiency is associated with higher susceptibility to infection and disease. Deficiency in this vitamin has even been linked to decreased respiratory function.

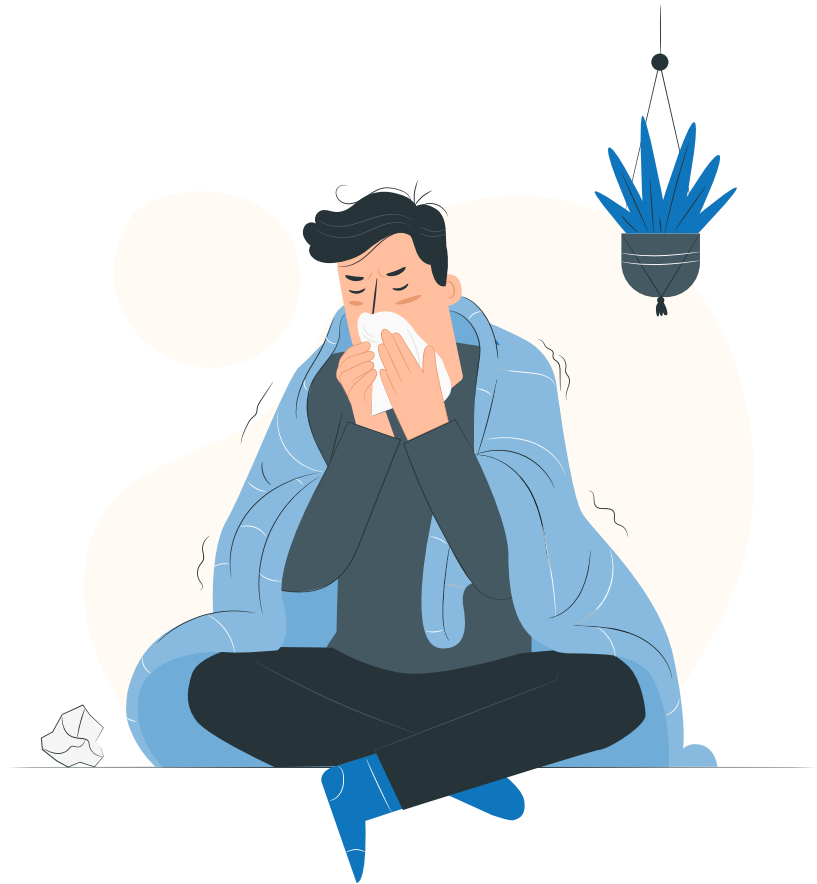
The best way to get your Vitamin D levels up? From the sun. 50% - 90% of vitamin D is absorbed through sunlight. If possible, ensure you are getting actual sunlight rather than taking supplements alone. All that's needed is fifteen

to twenty minutes of (non-sunscreen) exposure per day.

The other percentage of Vitamin D is absorbed through foods like salmon, sardines, egg yolks,

mushrooms, swiss cheese, cod liver oil and yogurt.

Taking supplements? Aim for 2,000 IU per day if you aren't getting enough sunlight, and 600 IU if you are.





“You can eat your Vitamin C through oranges, strawberries, grapefruits, spinach, bell peppers, and broccoli.”

Garlic

Garlic has been used for hundreds of years to stave off infection and germs. One of the compounds of garlic, allicin, is what gives it these magical health properties as it aids your white blood cells in the fight against sickness. Garlic is also packed with iron, magnesium, vitamin C, and potassium. Benefits of eating garlic not only include stronger immune function, but lowered risk of heart disease and lower cholesterol.

The best way to absorb this centuries-old medicine? By eating garlic raw. Cooking this veggie can reduce some of its beneficial properties, so try

mincing raw garlic and adding it to your salad dressing, soup or toast.

Can't stand the taste of raw garlic? Aim for 300 mg per day (around one or two cloves) of garlic supplements.

Vitamin C

Studies show that Vitamin C decreases inflammation and thus, improves the function of your immune system. Vitamin C has also been shown to increase the activity of immune cells that fight off bacteria. Have a bad cold? Vitamin C can help reduce the severity of those sneezes and sniffles, and well as reduce the duration

of the cold. Be careful to not become deficient in this important vitamin—vitamin C deficiency has been linked to a weakened immune system and higher susceptibility to infections.

You can eat your Vitamin C through oranges, strawberries, grapefruits, spinach, bell peppers, and broccoli.

Prefer taking supplements? Try at least 65 - 90 mg per day. 

Illustrations by Storyset

Healthy Eating Hacks

When it comes to eating, it can feel like we either have too many choices or no choices at all.

Walking down a grocery aisle can feel like navigating through a minefield of temptation—chips, dips, chocolate-covered everything. And, at the end of the day, sometimes it can be easier to just grab a bag of chips when you're craving a snack.

But, if you're looking to lead a healthier lifestyle, next time instead of reaching for a bag of chips, reach for this healthy eating substitution guide:

Snacks

- Potato chips

Swap with:

- Kale chips. Kale is packed with antioxidants, vitamin C and K.
- Sweet potato wedges. Sweet potatoes are loaded with vitamin A, B6, C, and D.
- Popcorn. Popcorn contains both antioxidants and fiber.

Candy

Swap with:

- Dried fruit. Dried fruit has fiber and antioxidants that help improve blood flow and digestion.
- Frozen blueberries. Blueberries have iron, calcium, magnesium, aid in brain health, and may help protect against heart disease.

Milk chocolate

Swap with:

- Dark chocolate: Dark chocolate has magnesium, iron, fiber, potassium,



zinc, selenium (and tons of antioxidants).

Ice cream

Swap with:

- Frozen yogurt: Frozen yogurt is a source of protein with probiotics that aid digestion.
- Frozen bananas. Bananas are a great source of vitamin C and also aid in digestion.

Granola

Swap with:

- Nuts. Often granola has added sugar, while nuts added to your yogurt contain fiber, protein, and vitamins like magnesium.

Cooking Oil

Swap with:

- Applesauce. If you're baking a cake or brownies, applesauce can make for a healthy substitution for oil with its flavonoids that help reduce inflammation and regulate blood pressure.

Butter

Swap with:

- Coconut oil. Coconut oil



is packed with fatty acids, which may help your heart health and cholesterol.

- Baked potato with salsa.

Mashed potatoes

Swap with:

- Mashed cauliflower. Cauliflower contains fiber, Vitamin B, and antioxidants that may protect against cancer.

Mayonnaise

Swap with:

- Hummus. Whether it's in your sandwich or being used as a dip, hummus is packed with protein and fiber. 📌

Meals

Pizza

Swap with:

- Cauliflower crust. Enjoy the pizza--just change out the crust!

Deli sandwich

Swap with:

- Pita wrap with spicy chicken and veggies. Pita bread is low in calories and has tons of Vitamin B.

Sides and spreads

French fries

Swap with:

Illustrations by Storyset

Things to Consider Before Adopting a Pet

Adopting a pet is an important decision. It's a great way to expand your family and bring joy to your life. Here are some things to ask yourself before you make the commitment.

What kind of pet is the best fit?

There are many different types of pets, from the more common (think dogs, cats, hamsters) to the more unique (lizards, turtles, and even tarantulas). And then there are other factors to consider. For example, if you're considering a dog, each breed has different personality traits! You want to find a pet that will mesh well with your current lifestyle. Why do you want to adopt a pet? Are you looking for a fluffy companion or an interesting animal? How much time and money do you want to invest?

How much time do you have to spend with your pet?

If you travel often, maybe



consider a pet that doesn't mind being alone for longer periods of time, like a lizard or a turtle. Some pets, like dogs, require attention and exercise on a daily basis. And if that dog is under 2 years of age, it will require additional exercise and training. Puppies can be a lot of work! If the pet is for a young child, it may be worth considering something a bit easier to care for, like a

hamster or a bearded dragon.

Do you have a plan in place if your circumstances change?

Sometimes circumstances change or a pet is not a good fit for a family. However, it can be stressful for a pet to be rehomed. By preparing for a change in circumstances, you can help prevent that situation. Are you on a temporary lease or do you own your place of residence? What will you do if you have to move? Are children a possibility? Do you know someone trustworthy who could foster the pet - or adopt it - if needed? You can't possibly prepare for every situation, but having a backup plan in place helps protect your future pet's wellbeing.

Once you've decided what type of pet is the best fit for you, the next step is to adopt. The only thing left to consider is what you'll name it! 

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