



UNC
KIDNEY CENTER

Podcast Transcript:

Dr. Ron Falk

Minimal Change Disease

“Minimal Change Disease: What steps can I take to ensure optimal health?”

Parent of Patient What steps can I take to make sure that my daughter stays as healthy as possible? Do you have suggestions on diet or lifestyle modifications?

Dr. Falk I think usual preventive measures to avoid infections are most useful. Make sure that your daughter has all the necessary vaccinations, especially in remission.

The more problematic question that you've asked, the one that's really difficult to deal with is suggestions on diet or lifestyle modification. Prednisone makes everybody want to eat, and eat everything. Including this table if it's not tied down! It's just incredibly difficult to tell your daughter to avoid carbohydrates or other fattening foods. One of our main worries with prednisone therapy is the gain of a tremendous amount of weight—not fluid weight, but real fat that is not nicely distributed. It can be in the back of the neck, it can make those chubby cheeks that you've seen. Unfortunately even if the disease goes into remission, the consequences of weight gain with prednisone turns out to be a longer problem.

I would encourage your daughter to remain active, to try to maintain as normal of a lifestyle as absolutely possible, to avoid infections and those people who may have infections. And to try a diet that does not rely on carbohydrates, sodas and ice cream, but has plenty of fruits and vegetables and meat or other sources of protein that can help avoid protein-calorie malnutrition.