

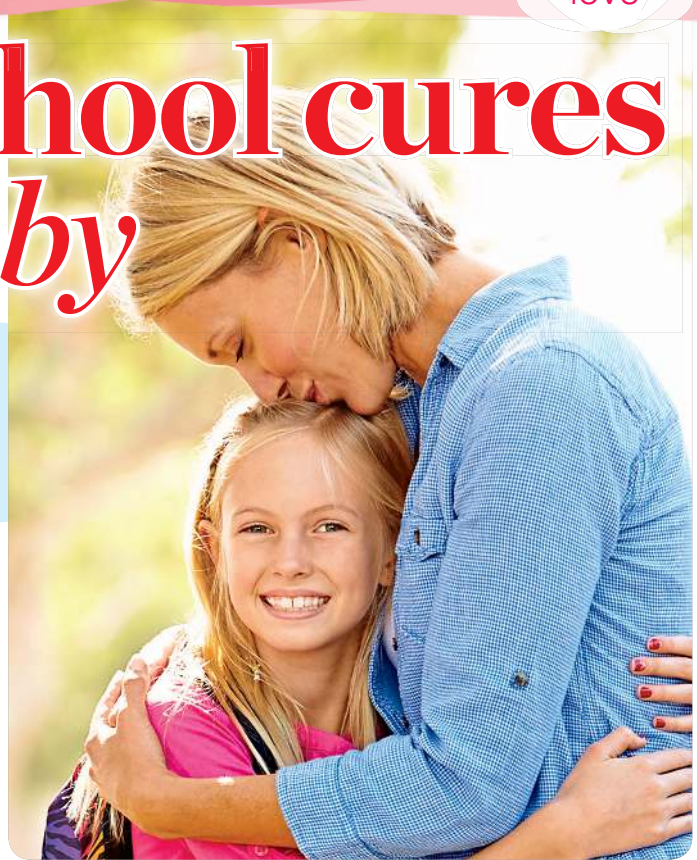
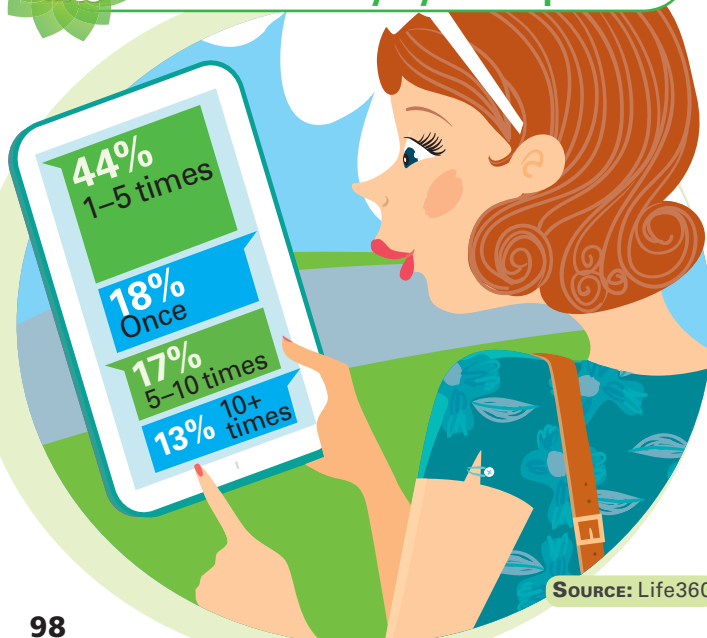
# Back-to-school cures MDs swear by

The kids are back in the classroom—and coming home with stomachaches, anxiety and other minor health problems. Here, how doctors treat their own children's back-to-school ailments and ouches

## Bellyache Rx Tummy time

"Transitioning to a school-week mentality made Sunday nights stressful in my house, which led to bouts of stomach pains for my daughter," says mother-of-three Jen Trachtenberg, M.D., an assistant clinical professor of pediatrics at the Icahn School of Medicine Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. To help, Dr. Trachtenberg added "tummy time" to her daughter's bedtime routine. While her daughter lays down with her eyes closed, Dr. Trachtenberg places a warm washcloth on her stomach and gives her a 5-minute belly massage, using small circular motions. "The movement, pressure and warmth relax abdominal muscles, promoting movement throughout the GI tract," says Dr. Trachtenberg. After the massage, she gives her daughter a glass of water mixed with Culturelle Kids Probiotic Packets (\$19 for 30 packets, [Target.com](#)). "It helps restore the balance of good bacteria in the digestive tract."

## quick take How often moms check in with their kids daily by smartphone



## Can't-sleep Rx A frothy sip

"This year my son started a new school, and that came with a mix of anxiety and excitement, which led to sleepless nights," says mother-of-two Melissa Doft, M.D., a clinical assistant professor of plastic surgery at the Weill Cornell Medical College in New York City. So she started serving him a warm mug of frothed milk 30 minutes before bed. "The tryptophan in milk helps the body make melatonin, a hormone that regulates the sleep-wake cycle," says Dr. Doft. "Plus, the frothing makes the drink feel special." To double-down on the melatonin effect, she also gave her son an after-school snack of walnuts. "They're a good source of tryptophan and contain their own source of melatonin."

## Lice Rx A natural gel

"When my daughter was in second grade, lice struck," recalls Lawrence D. Rosen, M.D., coauthor of *Treatment Alternatives for Children* and a father of two. "I didn't want to use a pesticide on my child, so I turned to LiceMD (\$10, [Walmart.com](#)), a nontoxic natural product. It worked great!" In fact, one study found it to be more effective than medicated shampoo. Its active ingredient is a slippery lubricant (*dimethicone*) that suffocates lice. Explains Dr. Rosen, "I applied it to my daughter's dry hair and let it sit for 10 minutes. With the product still in, I sectioned and combed her hair with a special comb to remove live lice and nits, then I shampooed her hair. One treatment is all we needed!"