

18 Month Well Child Visit

Weight _____ (%) Length _____ (%) Head Size _____ (%)

Toddlers are delightful, challenging, frustrating and adorable all at once. Their development in the areas of language and independence is impressive to behold and demands patience, respect and consistency from their parents. Cheerful play with a real or imaginary friend can change in a few seconds to a desperate tantrum. Toddlers really develop a “mind of their own” around this age. It can be frustrating for both parent and child when they refuse to do what others ask of them or insist adamantly on doing things their own way. When parents see this stubborn independence as evidence of their child’s emerging competence and autonomy, they can better enjoy this period with humor and pride.

Safety

The biggest threat to your child’s health is an injury!

- **Car Seats** – Buckle up every time **REAR-FACING!!**
- **Outdoor Play** – Always supervise your toddler when playing near a street or driveway.
- **Poisoning** – Medicines, cleaning products, and plants can all be dangerous! Never store any cleaning product or chemical in a juice or soda bottle. Put Poison Control Stickers by the phones. 1-800-222-1222
- **Drowning** – NEVER leave your child alone even for a second in or near a pool or bathtub. Taking swimming lessons is NOT protective.
- **Choking** – Plastic bags, balloons, peanuts, popcorn, small toys are still dangerous for your child.
- **Firearms** – It is best to keep all guns out of the home. Safe storage is essential.
- **Fires** – Check your smoke alarms.
- **Tobacco Exposure** – Smoking is dangerous for your toddler. If someone at home smokes, your child smokes.
- **Other Safety Issues** – Block stairs with gates. Never leave your child unattended at home or in the car. Be aware of placement of chairs—your child may use them to climb to dangerously high places. Keep electrical outlets covered.

Development

Motor

- Walks quickly and may run; walks up stairs with one hand held; walks backwards; climbs into an adult chair.
- Eats with a spoon and a fork; can stack a tower of 3 blocks; scribbles with crayons
- Squats to pick up objects

Cognitive skills

- Knows the location of objects that have been hidden; plays pretend games such as drinking from an empty cup and talking on a play phone

Communication skills

- May say 10-15 words;

- Understands commands; points to body parts on command; may put two words together.

Social

- Tends to be rebellious.
- Plays alone, but likes to copy other children.
- Shows affection.
- Is impatient and easily frustrated.

Attention

- Children at this age have “rigid attention.” They will attend to their own choice of activity for a short period of time. They cannot carry on an activity and listen at same time.

Nutrition

- If you are not doing so already, establishing regular mealtimes at the table.
- A decline in appetite is normal and does not mean your child is missing out on nutrients necessary for growth.
- In most circumstances children can decide for themselves what to eat. Most children are finicky eaters. Avoid arguments around your child’s food intake. **OFFER HEALTHY CHOICES ☺**
- Offer at least 2 servings a day of an iron rich food such as iron-fortified cereal. Read the labels and look for foods with 40-50% daily iron.
- Take great caution in heating foods in the microwave—stir thoroughly to evenly distribute the temperature.
- Do not allow children to be mobile with food or drink.
- Children at this age should be feeding themselves and drinking from a cup. **NO MORE BOTTLES!**
- **REMINDER:** Your child is learning eating habits that will stay with them many years.
- **CAUTION:** No peanuts, popcorn, hotdogs, grapes, raisins, raw carrots or celery.

Special Note about Drinks

- Whole milk. Limit to 12-16 ounces a day. Delay switch to low-fat or skim until 2 years of age.

Caution: Too much milk can result in picky eaters, constipation, and anemia

- Juice is soda! It is a fun treat but not part of the daily diet unless prescribed by a doctor for constipation.

Behavior

- Your child is not developmentally ready to share. He or she is unpredictable and self-centered. This is normal!
- They enjoy active play. Play tends to be alongside other children and not interactive.
- It is normal for children at this age to use comforting measures such as thumb sucking or attachment to a favorite toy as means of handling stress or tension.
- Tantrums are common. Ignoring unwanted behavior is a skill that, once mastered, works!
- Limit television – Set the rules now.
- Your child may be interested in the toilet but typically too young for potty training. Keep interactions positive.
- Praise routinely for good behavior and self-care. That will help reinforce these behaviors.

Discipline

- Distracting and redirecting techniques are less useful at this age. Developing a disciplinary plan like “time-out” is often necessary. Bring all caregivers on board!
- Toddlers understand consistent and immediate consequences only and need a lot of repetition.
- Time Out done correctly and consistently is very effective for most children. One minute for every year of age then start with “Clean Slate.” No discussion, nagging, threatening, or reminding.
- Stop and put yourself in time out if needed rather than give in or enforce rules in a way you later regret.

Oral Health

- Baby teeth are important spacing guide for permanent teeth. Take care of them.
- Injured teeth (chipped, broken, knocked) need to be seen by dentist. Otherwise first dental visit is 3 - 4 years of age.
- Brush teeth at least once per day using a soft tooth brush and rice-grain size toothpaste.
- Know the fluoride content of your child’s primary drinking water source. This will help determine when fluoride toothpaste or supplements may be started.
- No bottle. No sugar on teeth at bedtime including breast milk.
- Pacifiers and finger-sucking usually do not cause dental problems at this age.
- Link pacifiers to sleep. This will help protect your child from infection and make breaking the habit easier to break later. Never keep it on a string around the neck.

Healthy Sleep

- Most toddlers take at least one nap per day. If your toddler won’t sleep during nap time, a regular “rest” or “quiet” time may be helpful for parent and child.
- Amount of sleep varies. Napping longer than 2 hours or after 4pm in the afternoon may contribute to problems falling asleep at night
- If not already done so, establish a regular bedtime ritual which may include reading before bedtime.
- Problems such as bedtime resistance, nighttime awakenings, and night fears are common and can be very disruptive to

you and your family. Please discuss these with your pediatrician.

Today’s Visit

Handouts

- Water Safety Handout
- Reading Check Up (2 yr)
- One Minute Car Seat Safety Handout
- Developmental Screening results (if completed in advance – otherwise will be mailed to you)

Vaccines

- Hepatitis A #2 of 2
- Influenza (Fall and Winter)

Screening – Standardized Developmental Screen (PEDS) and Autism Screen (M-CHAT)

Next Visit

- At 2 years of age. Please schedule at least 2 months in advance. Typically no vaccines.
- Important developmental screening will continue at this visit. **Please complete the developmental testing prior to your 2 year appointment**
- Flu booster in 1 month if needed

EMERGENCY CARE

- If you feel your child may need urgent care please call the office no matter what time of day or day of the week it is. **Remember minor cares and health clinics in grocery stores are not recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.**
- **Remember that fever itself is not an emergency.** Look for other signs your child may be seriously ill such as skin color, alertness, and breathing. Call if the fever reaches 105 and see your doctor within 48 hours of fever over 102. Other fevers can be managed safely at home if there are not other concerning symptoms. Oral or rectal temps only please!
- In the event that your doctor advises you to go the emergency room, we strongly recommend **Dell Children’s Medical Center, the only facility in the area specializing in the care of children.** It is located at 4900 Mueller Boulevard, Austin, TX. Phone: 512-324-0000

Homework

Develop a discipline method and recruit all caregivers to ensure its success.

Keep reading everyday! The love of books starts early.

Take safety seriously. Your child cannot be trusted!

Buckle up. ALWAYS.

COMPLETE YOUR DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING JUST PRIOR TO YOUR 2 YEAR APPOINTMENT !