



Important Points for the 18 Month Visit

Nutrition:

How Do I Know If My Child Is Eating Enough?

Children eat when they are hungry and usually stop when they are full. Some parents worry because young children appear to eat very small amounts of food, especially when compared to adult portions. A child who is growing well is getting enough to eat. A serving size for a child is often 2-3 Tablespoons! To check your child's eating pattern, pay attention to his or her food choices.

- Make sure no one food group is completely left out. If this happens for a few days, don't worry. But prolonged neglect of a food group could keep your child from getting enough nutrients.
- Encourage your child to be adventurous and eat a variety of foods within the food groups, too. Even within a food group, different foods provide different nutrients.

Development:

Walks quickly, may run, walks up stairs with one hand held, walks backwards, climbs up onto an adult chair, eats with a spoon and a fork, stacks blocks, scribbles with crayons, knows the location of objects that have been hidden, plays at pretend games such as drinking from an empty cup, hugging a toy doll, taking into a toy telephone, understands commands, points to body parts on command, may put two words together, has a vocabulary of 10-15 words, likes to play with other children and is making the transition from parallel play to cooperative play. Your child will have a burst in cognition within the next 6 months; it is a crucial time to read to your child.

Touchpoints:

- Did you ever hear that temper tantrums start at 2? As you have experienced this is not the case. Temper tantrums reflect an inner struggle within the world of independence. The conflict between "Will I or won't I? Do I or don't I?" is so intense it often leads your toddler into a world of tumultuous ambivalence. Often, a firm, uninvolved approach helps the most. Too many choices can overwhelm your toddler so limit choices to a minimum: "The red shirt or black shirt?" Never ask your toddler an open question: "Do you want to take a bath?" unless you are willing to accept the answer.
- Discipline should be consistent, but done in a loving and understanding manner. Provide alternatives: "No, you cannot play with the telephone, but you can play with these blocks." Spanking a child teaches aggression and does not allow for your child's own self regulation. Hitting and biting are common behaviors at this age, but the behavior should not be permitted.

Safety:

- Continue to use a rear facing car seat and never place your baby in the front passenger seat. You will not turn your baby forward until 2 years or older, or have outgrown weight or height limits for seat.
- There is no such thing as a childproof cap. Poisons, medications and toxic household products should be kept in a locked cabinet. Childproof your doors; your child can open them.
- Always use sunscreen when your child goes out to play. Avoid going outside between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. when the sun's UV rays are most dangerous.
- If guns are in your house, lock the guns and ammunition separately, and hide the keys where your child cannot reach them. Kids need to understand that guns are not toys and learn how to behave around them.
- Always empty buckets, tubs or small pools immediately after use.
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and check that they work properly every month. Keep the baby's environment free of smoke: no smoking in the home or car.
- Keep your toddler away from moving machinery, lawn mowers, overhead garage doors, driveways and streets.

What to expect during this visit:

- Your child will receive the following immunizations: Hep A.
- We will discuss your baby's growth and development and any other concerns that you may have. Please prepare and bring in questions for your next visit at 24 months.