



Important Points for the 5 Year Visit

Nutrition:

Appetite is usually much better at 5 as your child begins the second of three growth spurts. Limit carbohydrate snacks like soft drinks, chips, candy and cookies. Instead, encourage healthy snacks, such as vegetable soup, graham, animal crackers or fig bars, cooked carrots or squash, yogurt or string cheeses, low fat milk ** (flavored or unflavored), turkey or meat cubes, hard-cooked eggs, fruits and vegetables. Begin to teach proper table manners and encourage conversation during family meals. Turn the TV off during meals.

Development:

Skips, can walk on tiptoes and jumps forward, throws ball overhand, washes hands and brushes teeth unassisted, can cut and paste, can name colors, can state name and age, tells a simple story, knows alphabet, knows phone number, address and several nursery rhymes, can copy triangle, draws a 6-part person, understands right/wrong, fair and unfair, engages in make-believe and dress up play.

Oral Health:

Continue regular dental appointments every 6 months. Supervise brushing twice per day with a pea size amount of fluoridated toothpaste. Discourage swallowing any toothpaste.

Touchpoints:

Your child is about to begin "real" school for the first time. Here are some guidelines indicating your child is ready to start kindergarten: he plays well with other children and takes turns, she is able to follow directions, he conforms to simple rules regarding behavior, she feeds and dresses herself (except for tying shoes), he is able to separate from parents, after a short transition time. Children this age need approval, praise and encouragement. They want to be proud of their work. Building self-esteem is very important at this age. Avoid physical punishment—it only promotes fear and guilt and teaches the child that violence is acceptable. Do not worry if your child becomes curious about body parts; this is normal at this age. Always use the correct terms for genitals.

Safety:

- Use a booster seat, in the back seat, until the vehicle seat belt fits properly. The lap belt should lie across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt should fit across the chest (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall).
- 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.
- If he cannot yet do so, begin to teach your child his or her full name, address and phone number.
- 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.
- Enroll in swim lessons and remember that knowing how to "swim" does not make your child water-safe at this age. All pools must be gated. Always use sunscreen when your child is outside playing or swimming.
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and check that they work properly every month. Keep your 5 year old's environment free of smoke: no smoking in the home or car. Conduct fire drills.
- Teach your child rules for interacting with strangers, either on the phone or at the door. Develop a secret code word that only the parents and child know can be used with another adult in case of extreme emergency.
- Teach bicycle safety and make sure your child always wears a helmet and shoes while riding a bike, scooter or skateboard.

What to expect during this visit:

- The following immunizations will be given unless they were administered at 4 years of age: Dtap, IPV, MMR and varivax. Please refer to the "After the Shots" handout for further instructions. Other screening includes vision, hearing, and blood pressure. Please let us know if your family has a history of high blood pressure, high cholesterol or triglycerides.
- We will discuss your child's growth and development and any other concerns that you may have. Please prepare and bring in questions for your next visit at 6 years. Your child's next immunization will be a tetanus, meningitis, and pertussis booster between 11-12 years of age.