



Well Child Care at 15 Months

Feeding

Your baby is ready to be weaned off the bottle – if you haven't done so already. Your baby should get 16-20 ounces of whole milk per day by cup/sippy cup. Limit milk intake to no more than 24 ounces per day. Breast-fed infants should also receive whole milk by cup.

Plan your baby's diet to include the 4 food groups. Avoid foods that could choke (hot dogs, grapes, large pieces of hard foods or candy). Three scheduled meals and 2-3 scheduled snacks is ideal.

Make sure he eats at the table, secured in a high chair and supervised by an adult. Make mealtime fun.

Your baby may be messy. Keep portions of food put on the high chair tray small. Encourage your baby to use his fingers and utensils that are child-sized and easy to hold. Your baby should be progressing along to feeding himself completely without your assistance.

Do not allow your toddler to carry a bottle or sippy cup of juice/milk around the house. Do not leave bowls of cereals or crackers out to be eaten at random. This "grazing" interferes with good eating habits and appetite development.

*Limit juice to no more than 4-6 ounces per day and always serve juice in a cup. Do not give your baby soda pop, tea, or other non-food drinks.

Have your toddler eat with the entire family. He will learn both the nutritional and social aspects of eating that way.

Development

Toddlers are very curious and want to be the boss. This is normal. If they are safe, this is a time to let your child explore new things. As long as you are there to protect your child, let him satisfy his curiosity. Stuffed animals, toys for pounding, pots, pans, measuring cups, empty boxes, and soft balls are examples of toys your child may enjoy.

Toddlers may want to imitate what you are doing. Sweeping, dusting, or washing play dishes can be fun for children.

Toddlers may start to have temper tantrums at about this age. It is best to make sure your toddler is in a safe place and then ignore the tantrum. You can best ignore by not looking at him directly and not speaking to him or about him to others when he can hear what you are saying. Fear of separation may intensify at this age. Tell your child you are leaving and emphasize that you will be back. If possible, try to avoid long separations from your toddler.

Here's what you might see your child doing between the ages of 15 and 18 months.

Daily Activities

- Avidly explores everything
- Revels in water play
- Likes to feed self
- Begins to use more objects conventionally (comb in hair)
- Enjoys throwing, rolling, pushing, pulling toys

Motor Skills

- Stands unsupported
- Walks without assistance with wide stance and outstretched arms
- Climbs stairs with assistance
- Refines grasp
- Picks up objects from a standing position

Language Development

- Uses 3 to 6 words
- Adds gestures to speech
- Likes to watch and imitate activities
- Uses voice to gain attention
- Has own words for objects

Cognitive (Thinking and Learning) Development

- Looks to parent for help in solving problems
- Learns cause-effect relationship (repeats enjoyable actions)
- Looks for hidden objects in last place seen
- Begins to experiment through trial and error

Using Play to help your toddler's physical development

- Provide stuffed animals, dolls, books, and toy cars.
- Supply musical toys such as busy or music boxes.
- Use toys that can be ridden such as small plastic tricycles.
- Have pots and pans for banging.
- Provide toys that can be pounded, pushed, or pulled.
- Provide toys that fit inside each other or can be filled or emptied.
- Provide soft balls.
- Furnish action games such as dancing or play chasing.
- Let him color and draw.

Using play to help your toddler's language development

- Read to your child.
- Listen to tapes with your child.
- Sing.
- Talk to your child. Tell him what you are doing and name things around him.
- Repeat word and point to object when teaching a new word.

Sleep

Your toddler requires one or two naps during the day. Establish a bedtime routine with nightly rituals and quiet time. Bath time followed by a bedtime story may relax your toddler and prepare him for sleep. If you have concerns about sleep problems, ask your care provider for advice.

Safety Tips

Avoid Choking and Suffocation

Keep plastic bags, balloons, and small hard objects out of reach. Use only unbreakable toys without sharp edges or small parts that can come loose. Cut foods into small pieces. Avoid foods on which a child might choke (popcorn, peanuts, hot dogs, chewing gum)

Prevent Burns and Fires

- Keep lighters and matches out of reach
- Don't let your child play near the stove
- Use the back burners on the stove with the pan handles out of reach
- Turn the water heater down to 120 degrees F
- Install smoke detectors on every level of your home

Car Safety

- Never leave your child alone in the car.
- Use an approved toddler car seat correctly.
- Parents should wear seat belts.
- Children who weigh more than 20 pounds and are older than one year of age should ride in a forward-facing car safety seat placed in the center of the back seat.

Pedestrian Safety

- Hold onto your child when you are around traffic.
- Supervise outside play areas.

Prevent Drowning

Continuously watch your child around any water, including toilets and buckets. Keep toilet seats down and store buckets upside down.

Poisons

- Keep all medicines, vitamins, cleaning fluids, etc. locked away.
- Put the poison center number on all phones. The poison control number is **1-800-222-1222**.
- Ask your doctor about syrup of ipecac. Use it only if you are told to do so by your doctor.
- Purchase all medicines in containers with safety caps.
- Do not store poisons in drink bottles, glasses, or jars.

Next Visit

Your child's next routine visit should be at 18 months of age.

Additional Health Resources

Virtual Children's Hospital - www.vh.org/vch
<http://kidshealth.org>
www.generalpediatrics.com

Credits:

American Academy of Pediatrics; Pediatric Behavioral Health Advisor; Health Informatics

www.aap.org

<http://uiowa.healthinformatics.net>

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