



Well Child Care at 18 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.

Discipline

A temper tantrum is a child's immature way of expressing anger. As parents you should recognize that temper tantrums are normal and an expected part of growing up. Hunger, tiredness, and illness can contribute to temper tantrums.

When your child acts up, do the following to parent effectively:

- Remain calm.
- Do not get angry or upset with him.
- Be loving but firm.
- Be very clear about the rules and limits that are important to you.
- Tell him what you want him to do.
- Be consistent-respond the same way every time your child breaks the rules.
- Do not hit or spank your child.

- Ignore behavior as long as your toddler stays in one place, is not too disruptive, and is safe.
- More aggressive behavior can be managed with brief 1-2 minute time outs.

Toilet Training

At 18 months, most toddlers are not yet showing signs that they are ready for toilet training. When toddlers report to parents that they have wet or soiled their diaper, they are beginning to be aware that they prefer dryness. This is a good sign and you should praise your child. Toddlers are naturally curious about the use of the bathroom by other people. Let them watch you or other family members use the toilet. It is important not to put too many demands on a child or shame the child during toilet training.

Physical development

Every child develops at his own rate and with his own style. This is not a strict timetable, but rather a guideline of things to expect between now and the 2-year visit.

What your toddler is learning to do:

- Walk fast, backwards, and up stairs with help
- Climb into chairs
- Kick and throw a ball
- Feed himself with a spoon-but mess when eating
- Drink from cup by himself
- Pull toys
- Dump objects from containers
- Draw stroke with crayon
- Hold and love favorite doll or stuffed animal
- Stack blocks or rings
- May begin to run

Using play to help your toddler learn

- Provide push and pull toys.
- Supply toys with various textures and surfaces for your toddler to feel.
- Allow him to subscribe and draw with crayons and paper.
- Play ball.
- Provide toys that fit inside each other.
- Furnish stacking blocks and toys to build towers.
- Provide toys that can be banged together.

Language Development

What your toddler is learning to do:

- Look at pictures and name objects
- Read book in his own language
- Use 4 to 10 words
- Use 2 word phrases
- Voice wants
- Follow simple directions

Using play to help your toddler learn

- Read books.
- Look at pictures.
- 'Talk' to grandma and grandpa on phone.
- Repeat newly learned words.
- Praise when he follows directions.

- Visit zoo and listen to animal sounds.

Social Development

What you can expect from your toddler

- Shy around strangers
- Mimic adult's behaviors
- Play beside other children or with adults
- Become more independent from parent
- Explore farther away from parent
- Test limits

What you can do

- Give lots of hugs and kisses.
- Reassure your toddler of your love.
- Allows him to help with chores.
- Make a game of picking up toys.
- Provide playtime with other children.
- Create times to explore the environment-your home, the yard the park.

Safety Tips

Avoid Choking and Suffocation

- Keep plastic bags, balloons, and small hard objects out of reach.
- Cut foods into small pieces.
- Store toys in a chest without a dropping lid.

Prevent Fires and Burns

- Keep hot appliances and cords out of reach.
- Don't cook with your child at your feet.
- Keep hot foods and liquids out of reach.
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach.
- Turn your hot water heater down to 120 degrees F (50 degrees C).

Pedestrian Safety

- Hold onto your child when you are near traffic.
- Provide a play area where balls and riding toys cannot roll into the street.

Prevent Drowning

- Always watch your child around any water, including toilets and buckets. Keep toilet seats down and store buckets upside down.
- Never leave an infant or toddler in a bathtub alone--NEVER.

Avoid Falls

- Check the stability of drawers, furniture, and lamps.
- Make sure windows are closed or have screens that cannot be pushed out.
- Don't underestimate your child's ability to climb.

Poisons

- Keep all medicines, vitamins, cleaning fluids, etc. locked away.
- Put the poison center number on all phones. The poison control number is 1-800-352-2222.
- Ask your doctor about syrup of Ipecac. Use it only if you are told to do so.
- Purchase all medicines in containers with safety caps.
- Do not store poisons in drink bottles, glasses, or jars.

Next Visit

Your child's next appointment should be at 2 years 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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