

Well Child Care at 2 Years

Nutrition

Family meals are important for your child. Letting your child eat with you makes her feel like part of the family. Don't make mealtime a battle. Let your child feed herself. Your toddler will continue to improve using the spoon, with fewer and fewer spills. It is good to let your child help choose what foods to eat. Be sure to give her only nutritious foods to choose from. Although it isn't necessary, you may switch to 2% milk. Your child should be completely off a bottle. It is normal for children this age to eat well some days, and seem to barely eat anything on other days!

Development and Discipline

At this age, children often say "no" or refuse to do what you want them to do. This normal phase of development involves testing the rules that parents make. Parents need to be consistent in following through with reasonable rules. Your rules should not be too strict or too lenient. Enforce the rules fairly every time. Be gentle but firm with your child even when the child wants to break a rule. Many parents find this age difficult, so ask your doctor for advice on managing behavior. Here are some good methods for helping children learn about rules and to keep them safe.

1. Child-proof the home. Go through every room in your house and remove anything that is valuable, dangerous, or messy. Preventive child-proofing will stop many possible discipline problems. Don't expect a child not to get into things just because you say no.
2. Divert and substitute. If a child is playing with something you don't want him to have, replace it with another object or toy that he enjoys. This approach avoids a fight and does not place children in a situation where they'll say "no".
3. Teach and lead. Have as few rules as necessary and enforce them. These rules should be rules important for the child's safety. If a rule is broken, after a short and clear explanation, punish immediately by having the child sit alone for 2 minutes. It is very important that punishment come immediately after a rule is broken.
4. Be consistent with discipline. Don't make threats that you cannot carry out. If you say you're going to do it, do it.

Some children at this age are showing signs that they are ready for toilet training. When your child starts reporting wet or soiled diapers to you, this is a sign that your child prefers to be dry. Praise your child for telling you. Toddlers are naturally curious about other people using the bathroom. If your child seems curious, let him go to the bathroom with you. Buy a potty chair and leave it in a room in which your child usually plays. It is important not to put too many demands on the child or shame the

child about toilet training. When your child does use the toilet, let him know how proud you are. Spend time teaching your child how to play. Encourage imaginative play and sharing of toys, but don't be surprised that 2-year olds usually do not want to share toys with anyone else. If you are going to allow television viewing, watch children's shows with your child, but limit viewing time to 1 – 2 hours per day. Mild stuttering is common at this age. It usually goes away on its own by the age of 4 years. Do not hurry your child's speech. Ask us about speech problems if you are worried about them. Read to your child every day.

Dental Care

Brush your child's teeth at least once daily. Pay close attention to your child's teeth and do not allow free access to the toothpaste.

Safety Tips

Avoid Fires and Burns

-) Practice your fire escape plan.
-) Check your smoke detectors. Replace the batteries if necessary.
-) Check food temperatures carefully. They should not be too hot.
-) Don't smoke or expose your child to smoke.
-) Keep hot appliances and cords out of reach.
-) Keep all electrical appliances out of the bathroom.
-) Keep matches and lighters out of reach.
-) Don't allow your child to use the stove, microwave, hot curlers, or iron.
-) Turn your water heater down to 120°F.
-) The poison control number is **1-800-222-1222**.

Car Safety

-) Use an approved toddler car seat correctly.
-) Sometimes toddler may not want to be placed in car seats. Please consistently put your child into the car seat every time you ride in the care.
-) Give the child a toy to play with once in the seat.
-) Parents wear seat belts.
-) Never leave your child alone in car.

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.

Avoid Drowning

-) Continuously watch your child around any water (including baths, swimming pools, and buckets with liquids).
-) Avoid Falls
-) Teach your child not to climb on furniture or cabinets.
-) Lock doors to dangerous areas like the basement.

Next Visit:

Your child's next visit is at the age of 2 ½ years.

Normal Development: 2 Years Old

Here's what you might see your child doing between the ages of 1 and 3 years.

Physical Development

-) is constantly in motion
-) tires easily
-) runs and climbs
-) walks up and down stairs alone
-) begins to tiptoe
-) builds a tower of 3 to 5 blocks
-) progresses from random scribbling to somewhat more controlled movements
-) develops greater interest in toilet training
-) has difficulty settling down for bedtime

Emotional Development

-) is in the "terrible twos" - easily gets upset and impatient
-) shows anger by crying or striking out
-) becomes frustrated when not understood
-) wants own way
-) asserts self by saying "no" to everything
-) reverts to baby behavior at times
-) gets upset when daily routine changes
-) shows sharp mood changes

Social Development

-) imitates with considerable realism
-) becomes more interested in brothers and sisters
-) knows gender
-) may have an imaginary playmate
-) enjoys playing among, not with, other children
-) does not share
-) claims everything is "mine"
-) may scratch, hit, bite, and push other children

Mental Development

-) dramatically increases interest in language
-) shows frustration if not understood
-) uses child grammar
-) uses three- to five-word phrases by end of second year
-) understands more words than can speak
-) is in the "do-it-myself" stage
-) cannot be reasoned with much of the time
-) cannot choose between alternatives

Each child is unique. It is therefore difficult to describe exactly what should be expected at each stage of a child's development. While certain behaviors and physical milestones tend to occur at certain ages, a wide spectrum of growth and behavior for each age is normal. These guidelines are offered as a way of showing a general progression through the developmental stages rather than as fixed requirements for normal development at specific ages. It is perfectly natural for a child to attain some milestones earlier and other milestones later than the general trend. Keep this in mind as you review these milestones.

If you have any concerns related to your child's own pattern of development, please give us a call.