

## Well Child Care at 5 Years

### Nutrition

Your child may enjoy helping to choose and prepare the family meals with supervision. This will help teach him good food habits. Mealtime should be a pleasant time for the family. Avoid junk foods, and too much juice. Children watch what their parents eat, so set a good example.

### Development

Children at this age usually are imaginative, get along well with friends their own age, and have lots of energy. Be sure to praise children lavishly when they share things with each other.

Wetting the bed at night is still common at this age. If your child still wets the bed regularly, you may want to ask about ways to help your child.

Five-year-olds usually are able to dress and undress themselves, understand rules in a game, and brush their own teeth. For behaviors that you would like to encourage in your child, try to “catch your child being good.” That is, tell your child how proud you are when he does things that help you or the family. Discipline for dangerous or hurtful behaviors is necessary. Sending a child to a quiet, boring place without anything to do for 5 minutes is one way of handling these situations.

Most children are ready to begin kindergarten at this age. We will help you assess your child’s readiness at this time.

### Immunizations

Your child should receive his DTaP, IPV, Varivax, and MMR. After a shot your child may run a fever and become irritable for about 1 – 2 days. Your child may also have some soreness, redness, and swelling in the area where a shot was given. For fever, give your child a dose of acetaminophen (we will give you the dose). For swelling or soreness put a wet, cool washcloth on the area of the shot as often and as long as needed for comfort.

### Call us immediately if:

- J Your child has a fever over 105°F.
- J Your child has a severe allergic reaction beginning within 2 hours after the shot (for example, hives, wheezing, noisy breathing, swelling of the mouth or throat).
- J Your child has any other unusual reaction.

### Dental Care

- J Brushing teeth regularly after meals is important. Think up a game and make brushing fun.
- J Your child should be receiving dental visits every six months.

### Safety Tips

Accidents are the number one cause of deaths in children.

### Avoid Fires and Burns

- J Practice a fire escape plan.
- J Check your smoke detector battery.
- J Keep a fire extinguisher.
- J Teach your child to never play with matches or lighters.
- J Teach your child emergency phone numbers and to leave the house if fire breaks out.
- J Turn your water heater down to 120°F.

### Car Safety

- J Always wear seat belts.
- J Don’t buy motorized vehicles for your child.
- J Your child must be in a car seat or booster seat.

### Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

- J Supervise street crossing. Your child may start to look in both directions but don’t depend on her ability to cross a street alone yet.
- J Buy and use a bicycle helmet.
- J Do not allow your child to ride a bicycle near traffic.
- J Don’t buy a bicycle that is too big for your child.

### Avoid Drowning

- J Continuously watch your child around any water.

### Avoid Falls

- J Never allow your child to climb on chairs, ladders, or cabinets.
- J Do not allow your child to play on stairways.
- J Make sure windows are closed or have screens that cannot be pushed out.

### Safety Around Strangers

- J Safety outside the home is very important to discuss with your child.
- J Teach your child her address and phone number and how to contact you at work.
- J Teach your child never to go anywhere with a stranger, or keep secrets.

### Poisons

- J Teach your child to take medicines only with supervision.
- J Teach your child to never eat unknown pills or substances.
- J Put the poison center number on all phones. The poison control number is **1-800-222-1222**.

### Next Visit

**A once-a-year check-up is recommended.**

## Normal Development: 5 Years Old

Here's what you might see your child doing at the age of 5 years.

### Physical Development

- ) Permanent teeth starting to appear.
- ) Displays left or right-handedness
- ) Builds elaborate structures
- ) Tires easily
- ) Bathes, eats, dress, toilets independently
- ) Begins to participate in semi structured games
- ) Enjoys active games and movement
- ) Enjoys playing noisy rhythm instruments
- ) Is curious about reproduction and birth.

### Emotional Development

- ) Begins to express more feelings in words
- ) Embarrasses easily, and cannot yet laugh at self
- ) Feelings about death appear
- ) Shows guilt over misbehavior
- ) Likes independence
- ) Is serious and dependable

### Social Development

- ) Submits to more rules and regulations
- ) May tattle, name-call, hit and shove at times
- ) Distinguishes between sex roles
- ) Cooperates in simple group tasks
- ) Likes to please adults
- ) Takes turns during playing and speaking
- ) Gets along comfortably with other children
- ) Is keenly interested in family activities

### Mental Development

- ) Begins to recognize a few letters and words
- ) Sustains activities over longer periods of time
- ) Has developed an overall image of self
- ) Craves facts
- ) Names simple colors
- ) Understands left and right on self
- ) Has a vocabulary of about 2000 to 2500 words
- ) Can help with easy, household chores
- ) Can learn address and phone number
- ) Can think some things through
- ) Counts to 10
- ) Begins to understand concept of opposites
- ) Can speak in sentences of 6 to 8 words
- ) Identifies coins
- ) Engages in elaborate dramatic play
- ) Understands concepts of morning, afternoon, night; yesterday, today, tomorrow
- ) Is better able to distinguish make-believe from real-life

**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.**