



## Watching you grow!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ %

Height: \_\_\_\_\_ %

Head circumference: \_\_\_\_\_ %

# Well-child exam: 18 months

## Nutrition

- Encourage your toddler to eat with the family by serving him in a high chair or booster seat at table height. A toddler most often will eat better when others are eating at the table with him.
- Make meal times a pleasant family environment and encourage conversation.
- Toddlers should sit still while eating and swallow all food before leaving the table or high chair.
- Encourage him to feed himself with his hands and drink from a cup. Also, he may use utensils.
- Offer foods from the basic food groups:
  - Dairy: milk, cheese and yogurt;
  - Protein: beans, eggs, fish and meat;
  - Fruit;
  - Green, orange and yellow vegetables;
  - Grains: breads, cereal, potatoes and rice.
- Your child should continue to drink up to 16-20 ounces a day of whole cow's milk until age 2.
- Avoid foods that can cause choking, such as whole hot dogs, raw vegetables, nuts and popcorn. Cut grapes and hot dogs into small pieces, lengthwise **and** crosswise.
- Allow your toddler to decide what and how much to eat from the nutritious foods you offer him. It is common for him to eat a lot one time and not much the next. Avoid arguments with your child about food intake. His food intake most likely will balance out and he will get what he needs to grow.
- Avoid fast foods, processed foods, soda and sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Limit fruit juice to 4-6 ounces daily and none at bedtime.
- Recommended Vitamin D intake is 600 IU daily. Recommended calcium intake is 700 mg daily.
- Other vitamins are not necessary if your child is eating a variety of foods.
- Children should be scheduled for a dental visit within six months of the first tooth, but no later than 12 months of age. As soon as your baby has a tooth, you may brush two times a day with a smear (size of grain of rice) of fluoride toothpaste on a child-size toothbrush with soft bristles. Start flossing when two teeth surfaces touch.
- Food should be used as nutrition, not as a pacifier.

*This sheet is not specific to your child, but provides general information. If you have any questions or concerns, please talk with your child's provider for assistance in finding additional resources.*

## Wetting and stooling

- Your toddler may be more interested in potty training. Set up a potty chair so he can imitate other family members as they use the bathroom.
- It is normal to have a soft stool every 1-3 days and 3-6 wet diapers daily at this age.

## Sleeping

- Your toddler should sleep 10-12 hours at night and 1-3 hours in the afternoon. Consistent, pleasant and predictable bedtime routines help promote good sleep habits that should last a lifetime.
- A security object, such as a favorite blanket or stuffed toy (with no removable small parts) may give added comfort to your toddler.
- Even if your child resists sleeping during the day, a regular "rest" or "quiet time" should be expected.
- Reading to your toddler at bedtime fosters language development and decreases bedtime problems.
- If your toddler is trying to climb out of his crib, it is time to transition to a bed.

## Illness

- Expect an average of 6-8 upper respiratory infections per year.
- Colds are caused by viral infections and will not respond to antibiotics. Unnecessary antibiotic use may increase your child's risk of becoming infected with resistant strains of bacteria.
- Prevent transmission of illness by keeping your child home until diarrhea or fever has been gone for 24 hours unless otherwise directed by your child's provider.
- Family members should wash hands frequently.

## Growth and development

At 18 months, your toddler may:

- Tend to play next to another child, not with him
- Enjoy active play, such as chase and tag
- Rarely share
- Play naming games of items around the house
- Build with blocks
- Follow simple instructions
- Scribble, paint and draw with chalk
- Feed himself with a spoon or fork
- Have temper tantrums

## Positive parenting

- Help your toddler develop a sense of independence.
- Allow some choices. For example, ask “Would you like to wear the blue or red shirt today?”
- If your toddler has opportunities to choose activities in some situations, he may be less resistant to restrictions you impose in other situations.
- Try to ignore tantrums or hold your child gently, but firmly, to help him gain control.
- Set a few simple, clear rules and be consistent.
- Expect commotion and messes with toys.
- Your toddler may still cherish a blanket or toy.
- Wean toddler from pacifier if he still is using one.
- Always praise good behavior and share lots of hugs and kisses.
- Consider time-out as the discipline measure of choice (one minute per year of age).
- Television/video screen time is **not** recommended for children under 2 years of age.
- Read to your child every day.

## Safety

- Use a rear-facing car seat in the back seat until your baby is 20 pounds **and** 2 years old. (AAP guidelines 4/09.) Consult your car seat manual for weight and height limits. Most infant car seats have a 20-pound limit. When your baby weighs 20 pounds, switch to a rear-facing, convertible seat that holds up to 30-35 pounds.
- **Never** leave your child alone in the car – even for a few minutes.
- Use safety gates at the top and the bottom of stairs and have safety devices on windows.
- Use safety latches on drawers and cabinets and cover electrical outlets with protective covers.
- Remove hanging cords from window drapes and blinds. Toddlers can become entangled and strangle themselves.
- Keep all poisonous substances, plants, medicines, cleaning solutions, beauty products, paints and solvents out of your child’s sight and reach. Keep garage areas safe also.
- Supervise your child constantly whenever he is in or around a bath tub, pool, lake, river, ditch, well or bathroom. A locked fence with a self-closing, self-latching gate should surround a pool.

## Pediatrician-approved Web sites:

www.aap.org  
www.cdc.gov  
www.centracare.com  
www.childrensmn.org  
www.chop.edu  
www.ecbt.org  
www.healthychildren.org  
www.kidshealth.org  
www.helpmegrowmn.org  
www.parenting.umn.edu  
www.health.state.mn.us/divs/cfh/program/cyshn/earlyintro.cfm



## Community resources:

### Child passenger safety seat inspections (free)

Call 320-229-5139 for an appointment or visit [www.buckleupkids.state.mn.us](http://www.buckleupkids.state.mn.us) for more information.

### Early Childhood Family Education

For classes about raising young children, contact your local school district.

### United Way 2-1-1 help line

Provides confidential information and referrals to thousands of community services. Call 2-1-1, 651-291-0211 or 800-543-7709.

### Crisis Nursery

An adult in crisis affects a child’s world. The Crisis Nursery is a free 24/7 temporary, safe haven where parents experiencing a family or personal crisis can call. For crisis day care/crisis counseling and family support, call 320-654-1090.

### Poison Control number

If you have a poison emergency or a question about a poison or about poison prevention, call 800-222-1222.

- **Do not** give your toddler plastic bags, latex balloons or small objects. Be aware of items that can cause choking, such as buttons, toy parts, batteries, coins or hard candies.
- Avoid peak sun times (10 a.m. to 3 p.m.) Apply sunscreen with SPF 15 or greater 30 minutes prior to being in the sun and reapply every two hours or according to manufacturer instructions. Toddlers should wear protective clothing, hats and sunscreen when going outdoors.
- If in an area with biting insects, apply repellent with less than 30 percent DEET or 5 to 10 percent picaridin repellent to skin and clothing to protect your child. (Avoid eyes.)
- Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in the home should be in working order. Change batteries every six months.
- Children in a bicycle carrier or safety seat should wear a bike helmet as well as you.
- **Never shake your child.** If you become too upset put your child in a safe place, such as a crib, and do not pick him up until you are calm. Call the clinic or 911 if you feel you may hurt your child.