

# Well Child Check

## 18 Months

### Nutrition

- Continue to avoid small, hard food that he/she may choke on like peanuts or popcorn. Cut firm, round foods (hot dogs, raw carrots, grapes, etc) into thin slices.
- Your toddler should be offered 3 meals per day and 2-3 nutritious snacks. Offer a variety of foods from the different food groups. Use fresh fruit (cut into small pieces) or vegetables with nut butter as snacks.
- Try to use **organic foods** when possible to avoid exposure to pesticides, genetically modified foods and added hormones.
- You may begin to substitute **whole milk** for breast milk or formula. Juice is not advised. If you have questions about **alternative milks**, please talk to your provider. The maximum amount of whole milk per day should be around 24 ounces. Toddlers don't need this much if they are eating other dairy sources including whole fat yogurts or cheese. When possible, try to choose organic grass-fed, whole fat dairy products without added sugar.
- **Iron** is an important nutrient at this age for proper development and growth. Good sources of iron include beans (lentils, kidney beans, black beans, garbanzo beans), leafy green vegetables (spinach and swiss chard), broccoli, eggs and meats, especially grass-fed beef and the dark meat of free-range poultry. Using in combination with foods high in vitamin C will increase the body's ability to absorb iron.
- Continue to offer drinks in a **sippy cup or regular cup**. Consider using **glass or stainless steel sippy cups** to avoid possible leaching of BPA (and other chemicals commonly found in plastics) into the liquid. Also let your toddler begin to use a small spoon at mealtime.
- Your toddler will likely eat less now than as an infant and will also have a slower rate of weight gain. Try to keep toddlers from "grazing". Let your toddler decide how much and what to eat of the nutritious variety of foods you offer. If your toddler asks for more, give more; if your toddler stops eating, accept that decision.
- Your toddler may become more picky. Do not limit the menu to food your toddler likes. You may also have to offer new foods several times before your child accepts it. Don't give up after one or two tries!
- There are benefits to **omega-3 fatty acids** in the diet and here are the sources: fresh or frozen wild salmon, canned sockeye, sardines, black cod, herring, walnuts (or walnut butter), algae products, freshly ground flax and hemp seeds, pumpkin seeds, omega-3 enriched eggs. Alternatively you can consider starting an omega 3 supplement: Preventively, for children 1-4 years of age the dose is 300-500 mg of DHA/EPA per day. Nordic Naturals is a trusted omega 3 product.
- Consider **vitamin D3 supplementation** for its immune and bone building properties. Recommended dose at this age is at least 600 IU daily.
- **Probiotic** supplementation and probiotic rich foods (such as organic kefir, grass-fed yogurt, miso, sauerkraut, kimchi) can be used to aid in immune function and digestion. Generally, probiotic supplements for children that are refrigerated are of higher quality.

### Development

#### 18 months:

- Gross Motor skills: walks quickly, may run; walks upstairs with one hand held; walks backwards; climbs up onto an adult chair
- Fine Motor skills: eats with a spoon and a fork; stacks blocks; scribbles with crayons
- Cognitive skills: knows the location of objects that have been hidden; plays at pretend games such as drinking from an empty cup; hugging a toy doll; talking into a toy phone
- Communication skills: understands commands; points to body parts; may put 2 words together
- Social skills: likes playing with other children

### Medication

- **FEVER = >100.4° F**
- **No Aspirin** until 18 years.
- **NO COUGH OR COLD MEDICINES.** If your toddler gets a cold, try humidified air and nasal saline drops with the bulb syringe. Please call our office if your toddler seems to be having difficulty breathing.
- **Tylenol** (Acetaminophen) may be given for fever, teething, or pain relief. Tylenol may be given as often as **every 4 hours**. Tylenol dosing is based on weight; please see chart below for your child's dose. We recommend using Tylenol **as sparingly as possible**

Toddler's Weight	Infant Tylenol or Children's Suspension (160mg/5ml)
12-17 lbs	2.5 ml (80mg)
18-23 lbs	3.75 ml (120mg)
24-35 lbs	5 ml (160mg)

- **Advil or Motrin** (Ibuprofen) may be given for fever, teething, or pain relief. Ibuprofen may be given as often as **every 6 hours**. Ibuprofen dosing is based on weight; please see chart below for your child's dose. Only for children >6 months. We recommend using Ibuprofen **as sparingly as possible**.

Toddler's Weight	Ibuprofen Concentration (50 mg/ 1.25 ml)	Ibuprofen Concentration (100mg/5ml)
12-17 lbs	1.25 ml (50mg)	2.5 ml(50 mg)
18 - 23 lbs.	1.875 ml (75mg)	3.75 ml (75 mg)
24 - 35 lbs.	3.75 ml (100mg)	5 ml (100mg)

### **Routine toddler care**

- Children at this age maybe anxious in new situations and often cling to parents as a way to reassure themselves.
- Talk, sing, and read with your child frequently. Encourage your child to repeat words and use words that describe feelings and emotions. Use simple, clear phrases to give instructions to your child.
- Brush your toddler's teeth with a small toothbrush twice a day. You may consider using toothpaste with fluoride. If your child is still using a bottle, try to place only water in that bottle to help prevent cavities. Schedule your first dental visit.

### **Discipline**

- Remember that the goal of discipline is to teach and protect your child, not to punish your child.
- Reward good behavior with frequent praise.
- Avoid spanking, shouting, or long explanations. You may try brief "time outs" at this age. Place your toddler in the crib or playpen for 1-2 minutes.
- Temper tantrums are common. Ignoring tantrums is one of the best ways to stop the behavior.
- Do not allow hitting, biting, or other aggressive behavior. Brief time outs are an effective way to teach your toddler that these behaviors are not acceptable.
- Children at this age want choice. "No" reflects a child's developing identity and this desire for choice. Try to avoid battles by giving your child two appropriate choices that are both acceptable to you. For example, ask your child to choose between wearing the red sweater or the blue sweater.
- CONSISTENCY is extremely important. Discuss "house rules" with all members and caregivers. Decide what limits are important and be specific when setting limits.

### **Potty training**

- The average age for a child to be potty trained during the day is 30 months.
- Wait to start potty training until your toddler is dry for periods of about 2 hours, knows the difference between wet and dry, can pull pants down, shows an interest in learning, and can indicate when about to have a bowel movement.
- Have a small potty seat or potty ring available for your child. Read books about using the potty. Praise your child when he/she sits on the potty with clothes on. Take your child into the bathroom with the appropriate gender parent to learn about the potty, and talk to your child about using the potty when changing diapers.

### **Car Seat**

- **A car seat** must be used every time your toddler is in the car. The rear facing position provides the best protection for your child's head and neck in the event of a crash. For the best protection, your toddler should remain rear facing until at least age 2 and may continue to be rear facing until reaching the highest weight or height allowed for your car seat. **Never** place a rear facing car seat in a front seat with an airbag.
- Please see <http://www.carseatscolorado.com/> to find a car seat fitting station near you.

### **Safety**

- Install a smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector. Replace batteries once a year on your child's birthday.
- Use appropriate barriers around radiators, space heaters, wood stoves, kerosene heaters, and fireplaces.
- Watch your toddler constantly whenever near water. A child may drown in even a few inches of water including bathtubs, wading pools, and toilets. Your child should always be within an arm's reach of an adult when around water. Children should always wear an approved life jacket when on a boat or other watercraft.
- Keep furniture away from windows and install window guards on second- and higher-story windows to prevent your child from falling out of a window.
- Keep plastic bags, latex balloons, or small objects (ie marbles) away from your toddler.
- Make sure heavy items like TV's and furniture are secure so that your child can't pull them over. Keep sharp objects (knives, scissors, etc) out of reach of your toddler.
- Avoid exposing your child to the sun for prolonged period of time. Use sunscreen with minimum SPF 30. Try to avoid sunscreens with oxybenzone, parabens and phthalates. We recommend mineral sunscreens when possible but note that they are not as waterproof. For reviews of safe child sunscreen brands, please visit <https://www.ewg.org/skindeep/>
- Avoid **all** tobacco smoke around your child. Children who are exposed to smoke have more respiratory and ear infections.
- The best way to prevent injury or death from a firearm is to not have guns in the home. If it is necessary to have a gun in your home, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked in a separate location.
- Hire an experienced babysitter who knows the basic care for infants as well as how to handle common emergencies. Provide the sitter with a list emergency phone numbers, list of child's allergies and current medications.
- Protect electrical outlets and cords. Remove dangerous objects and chemicals from lower cabinets or place locks on those cabinets.
- **Poison Control: 303-739-1123 or 1-800-222-1222**

*If you have questions about vaccines or vaccine safety, please ask your provider.*

***Your infant's next well check is at 2 years.***