



18-month check up

GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT & CAUTIONS:

Most children should be walking at this age. They should also be able to say 10 words. Your baby is able to pick-up and place objects. If the child has older siblings at home, have them keep their small toys out of reach that are a risk for choking. Your baby will go off on his own, away from parents. This is the time that accidents occur. Accidents can be avoided by taking steps to stop your child from getting into things that are dangerous to him/her. Make sure that you have gone around the house and "baby-proofed" it. Cleaning fluids, chemicals, medications, sharp and small objects all must be kept out of baby's reach. Make sure that pools are fenced and have a locked gate. Never leave your baby alone around water including dog watering dishes and open toilets. Make sure that the hot water heater temperature has been turned down to decrease the chances of severe burns.

EATING:

Your child should be using a cup instead of a bottle at this age. Many babies like the "sippy cup" and take to it readily. If your child has not given-up the bottle, there is an easy way to wean him/her. Fill the bottle with plain water and give milk or juice in his "sippy cup." Soon they will only drink from a cup. If water is used, it will be less appealing and the child will eventually give up the bottle. It is very important not to let your baby go to sleep with a bottle, unless it has only water. The fruit sugar in juice, and the milk sugar may cause tooth decay. Recommend no more than 1 cup of diluted juice a day since it has minimal nutritional value.

We recommend whole milk to provide a good calcium and caloric source, but limit it to 16 oz. per day. They should be getting the majority of their calories from food. Do not give your child "junk food" or fatty foods such as fast food, candies, ice cream, or soda. Feeding them "junk food" and processed sweets may lead to poor eating habits and increase their risk for obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Children at this age learn to know their likes and dislikes. Certain children will pick one meal per day to eat well. Never make food an issue. All children eat enough to grow on if enough food is provided. Meals should be simple and balanced. If healthy foods are served when your child is young, they will choose healthy foods when they are older. Vitamins should be given with iron (such as Flintstones or Bugs Bunny vitamins).

SELF-ESTEEM:

Here are some simple steps to guide your child with a strong sense of his own worth. Build on your child's strengths, catch him/her when doing something

right and tell your child how well he/she did. Tell your child "thank-you" when your child is helpful and listens to what you are telling him/her. Everyone wants to feel worthwhile and important. Encourage your child in learning a new task. Support your child in learning new behaviors and mastering new skills. Confidence is gained by doing, taking action and getting involved. The more new experiences your child has, the more sure he/she will be. Everyone needs to feel loved and capable. When talking about your child, talk about his/her past successes. Start building your child's self-esteem now. It is the best gift you can give to your child and yourself.

TOILET TRAINING:

First you need to find out if your child is ready. Most children are ready between 18 months and 30 months. A child is ready when he/she can sit for 10 to 15 minutes, enjoys approval and is willing to work a little for it. He/she is ready when they can understand and tell you when he/she needs to use the toilet. Once you begin, provide a physical and social atmosphere. Don't force him/her to sit longer than five to ten minutes. Stay with them during that time. Let your child know how pleased you are if he succeeds. Allow the child to see the results of his efforts. When your child soils his diaper, show some degree of displeasure, but don't punish or yell at him/her. Don't begin or push toilet training when there are stresses in his life. Urinary control requires that you set aside the time to take the child to the toilet frequently during the day. Use diapers at nap and night time until the diaper is dry when your child awakens. BE PATIENT. Bowel and bladder control will come when the child learns he/she is in control of his/her own body and he will have a feeling of pride and pleasure. Boys tend to toilet train later than girls.

SHOES:

A soft sole shoe is the best for your child's feet. Low cut cheap tennis shoes provide as good a foot support as expensive high hard-soled shoes.

SLEEPING:

The baby should have his own room and bed. He will sleep about twelve to fourteen hours, including a one to two hour nap.

IMMUNIZATION:

Check with your doctor and make sure your child is up-to-date on his/her shots.