



12-month check up

FEEDING:

It is now okay to give your baby whole milk and stop the formula. Low-fat and non-fat milk should not be given at this age. If you have questions talk to your physician. Most babies will take less milk than they did formula. They should drink at least two full bottles/cups a day, but no more than four bottles/cups of milk per day. Breastfeeding babies can also be started on whole milk, along with breast milk. Yogurt is a good food for your baby. Your child should be ready to use a "sippy cup." If you think your baby is ready for the weaning, begin to put only plain water in the bottle. You can use a "sippy cup" for milk and juice. If only plain water is put into the bottle, the baby will not like the bottle as much. In time your baby will leave the bottle alone. It is very important not to let your baby sleep with the bottle or "sippy" cup. The sugar in juice and milk may cause severe tooth decay if your baby sleeps sucking on the bottle with milk or juice.

Your baby can eat most of the table foods you eat by now. The food should be served so that your baby can eat them as finger foods or small enough to be eaten with a spoon. It is important that he/she be allowed to finger the food and try to feed him/herself. Babies are messy, so be prepared! Do not give peanuts, popcorn, raisins or hard candy, foods that baby can choke on or accidentally inhale into his lungs. You will see changes in your child's eating pattern. Sometimes your child will eat well and other times eat very little. This is normal because of changes in growth. Remember to provide healthy food choices to your child. By now your child should be having solid foods three times a day.

At the time baby changes over to whole milk, he/she will need a supplement vitamin with iron. Without the iron supplement a baby may become anemic. Many foods have vitamin supplements and if your baby eats a balanced diet. He may receive all the nutrients he/she needs.

TEETHING:

By now your baby may have several teeth. The average number of teeth at one year of age is six to eight. Some children don't get their first tooth until fifteen months. When your child has teeth, you should begin brushing with a child-sized toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste. Start good dental habits now, so that your child will have them for a lifetime. At four years of age, he can brush his own teeth with your help. His first dental checkup should come at three years of age. By this time, your child should have all of his baby teeth and this is a good time for him to become acquainted with the dentist.

TOILET TRAINING:

You should not start toilet training before your child is 18 months unless your baby shows a strong interest, and gives you clear signals he/she is ready. Girls are usually trained before boys. Your child is ready when he/she can walk well. Your child may have a usual time that he/she has a bowel movement. Your child can let you know that he/she is uncomfortable. When your child has these skills, he/she is ready to begin toilet training.

SHOES:

Again, a soft sole shoe is best for your child's feet. Low cut, cheap tennis shoes produce as good a foot as expensive high hard-soled shoes. As your child begins to walk, you may notice that his feet turn in. This provides him with added support and does not necessarily mean something is wrong with his feet. As children begin to walk, they tend to trip a great deal. Your child may fall or trip often, because he/she fails to look where he/she is going.

SAFETY:

Children are very active and curious at this age. Your baby will try to see, touch and play with anything within reach. It is important that the baby have a safe area where he/she can explore his/her area. Watch open doors and stairs. Use gates to protect your child. Be aware of poisoning. Be aware of the danger from houseplants, chemicals, and medicines and make sure all of them are on upper shelves and away from children. Have the poison control phone number, and first aid kit on hand for accidents. Make your child's play area is safe and interesting. Guard against scratches and bites from stray cats and dogs. Avoid hot water burns. Keep your water heater thermostat turned down to 120 degrees. Never leave a child alone in the tub or near any amount of water – even a pail or a puddle of water. If you have a pool, you should have a gate around it.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT:

The baby will learn to stand alone and later begin to take steps. Soon your baby will run with few falls by 24 months. His hand and finger controls are improving with time. He/she can pick up small objects and feed himself.

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 when he is doing something right and tell your child he/she is doing well. Tell your child "thank-you" when they are being helpful and listen to you. Everyone wants to feel they are OK. You will be letting your child know he/she is worthwhile and an important person. Encourage your child in learning a new task. Support your child in the right behavior and learning new skills. Confidence is gained by doing, taking action and getting involved. Expose your child to new experiences. Your child will have more confidence. Praise your child when he/she succeeds. Children need to feel they are loved and able to do things well. When talking about your child, talk about her/his past successes. Start building your child's self-esteem now. It is the best gift you can give to your child and yourself.

IMMUNIZATIONS AND BLOOD TEST:

Your doctor may draw blood to screen for anemia and elevated lead levels. Your child is due for shots. Make sure to check with your doctor to see if your child's shots are up to date.