



# DESERT GROVE

## Family Medical

Specializing in the HEALTH of Your Family!

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### 4 - 5 year check

#### **GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT:**

Your child's growth and change will not be as fast as before. They like physical activity and should be encouraged to use and develop their skills. Some of those skills are skipping, jumping, hopping, throwing, catching, and skating. You should know by now if your child is right or left handed. Permanent molars may begin to come through the gum.

#### **PLAYING AND LEARNING:**

Children in this age range usually want to do things for themselves. Most children at this age do not want to share. Children need to be taught to share. They have a difficult time waiting for any period of time. By age five, most children tend to listen when talked to and try to please. They enjoy playing with others, and will pretend and make up stories in play. Around age five, the need to belong to a group becomes important and children have more purpose and reason in their play. Rules are very important and all children in the group are to follow the group's rules.

#### **SELF-ESTEEM:**

Here are steps that will give your child a strong sense of his own worth. Build on your child's strengths, catch him when he is doing something right and make him/her know they are doing well. Say "thank you" when your child is helpful and listens to you. Everyone needs to feel OK and important. Give positive support for each step in the learning process. Support your child in learning new skills. Confidence is gained by doing, taking action and getting involved. The more life experiences your child has, the more confident he will become. Children need to feel loved and capable. When talking about your child, recall her/his past successes. Continue to build your child's self-esteem. It is the best gift you can give to your child and yourself.

#### **SLEEPING:**

Nightmares and night terrors are common among four-year-old children. Parents should gently awaken their child from a bad dream.

#### **TALKING:**

By five years of age, children are using eight word sentences and include all parts of speech. The amount of words your child uses will increase rapidly. Your child may sometime use words you don't want them to use, words they have picked up from older children or adults. Hesitations of speech or stuttering are normal at this age. Parent can help the child by being patient, not scolding or making fun of the child. Look directly at him/her when they are talking. Do not hurry him or provide missing words when he cannot think of them. Too much attention to the stuttering or speech can take away his confidence, and he/she will be unsure of his speech skill. The problem could become worse.

#### **SAFETY:**

Five-year-old children are accident prone. They are curious and love to run, climb, ride and test out new skills. Parents need to make their homes safe by locking doors, placing screen guards on windows, and locking up harmful objects (knives, firearms, poisons). Turn down the hot water heater setting to a maximum of 120 degrees F. Toys should be checked carefully for sharp edges and be careful with toys that propel objects. Safety education for children should

include swimming lessons, traffic safety (crossing the street, choosing safe play areas), bicycle safety, choking prevention (not running or laughing with food in the mouth), and fire safety (use of matches and lighters and fire escape route). When a child outgrows his child safety seat, he should be required to wear a seat belt at all times when riding in a car. Parents need to set an example by always buckling their seat belts. Booster car seats are recommended until the child weighs 70 pounds (in combination with a seat belt).

#### **EATING:**

Parents often think that preschoolers are not eating enough. Healthy foods are more important than the amount of food your child eats at this age. Be aware of the sugar and salt content of foods, especially breakfast cereals and snacks. A four-year-old may sometimes be fussy about what he eats. Children at this age will sometimes rebel. By age five, they are more open to new tastes, especially if an adult is serving a new dish. Family meals may not run smooth with four years old at the table. By the time a child reaches five years of age, he can control his behavior enough to sit through a meal.

#### **COMMON CONCERNS:**

Nursery school/Head Start can be an excellent setting for expanding a child's experiences with other children, especially if he is an only child. Nursery school can help with language, physical and social development. Nursery school can help get the child ready for school.

#### **FEARS:**

The best way to help children overcome their fears is by helping them find ways to deal with fears gradually and in non-threatening situations. This may be as simple as keeping a night light on in the child's bedroom or allowing him to watch other children play with a feared animal.

#### **SEXUAL CURIOSITY:**

At this age, the word "why" is the number one question. Asking questions about babies and sex may be as casual as, "Why is the sky blue?" Before answering a child's question, find out what he really wants to know. Ask him what he thinks is the answer. Answer with honesty and as simply as possible. Curiosity about the human body may lead "doctor play" among children. They are curious about all the different parts of the body. This is normal. One approach to dealing with this is not to scold them for their curiosity and not to encourage them. Encourage the child to ask you questions. Masturbation may also occur at this age. It is important that masturbation be accepted as a normal aspect of the child's sexual life, and that guilt or anxieties associated with it should be avoided. Guide your child to limit these behaviors to their "private time" when they are alone.

Talk to your child about their body parts, using their proper names. Discuss "good touch" and "bad touch" with your child. Explain to your child which adults are allowed to view your child's private areas and which types of touching is not appropriate. Encourage your child to come to you if they feel uncomfortable about something or if they have questions about their body.

#### **DENTAL:**

Remember, to keep your child's smile beautiful, schedule your child's yearly dental exam and help your child to brush and floss at least twice a day.

#### **IMMUNIZATIONS/TESTS:**

Your child is due for shots, TB test, and Hemoglobin