



# DESERT GROVE

## Family Medical

Specializing in the HEALTH of Your Family!

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### 3 year check

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

A three year old likes to run, climb, and jump, and will try new things that could cause your child to be hurt. Safety should be taught at this age. Teach them the dangers of water, poisons, burns, falls and other accidents. Teaching "do's" and "don'ts" with animals is also very important for the prevention of animal bites and abuse.

At age three, children tell you their name, can draw a circle, point to some colors when asked, repeat simple nursery rhymes, and speak using simple phrases and sentences of three to four words. Questions that begin with the word "what" are often asked.

A three-year-old enjoys books and watching TV. Read to your child and have them tell you stories about the pictures in the book. This will help them learn and use many words. While TV offers many good preschool programs that are fun to watch and the child will learn reading, colors, and about the world. You need to be aware of what your child is watching. A three-year-old should not watch adult programs. A three-year-old does not understand the difference between make-believe and real life, especially in the area of violence. Closely monitor the amount of time your child watches television. Make sure that your child has some time in the day where the television is off. This will help keep them active and playing. Encourage your child to have an active lifestyle full of running and playing. Introduce them to games and sports. Teach your child to incorporate exercise into their daily routine.

#### **EATING:**

The three-year-old will eat what he/she needs. Your child at three will tell you what his/her likes and dislikes are and often eats very little. Children like pretty colors, foods that crunch, and warm foods (not hot or cold). Serve simple foods in bite-size pieces so that they can easily eat them. Foods to be avoided are hot dogs, peanuts, small pieces of hard candy, popcorn, etc, which a child can easily eat. It is good to have set times to sit with the family and eat. Eating whenever a child wants should be avoided. Allowing children to run about while eating or drinking is dangerous because the child could choke on their food.

#### **SELF ESTEEM:**

Here are steps to help 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 him/her that they are doing well. Say thank you when your child is helpful and listens to what you tell them to do. Everyone, including children, want to feel OK and important. Give positive support for each step in the learning process. Encourage your child in learning a new task. Support your child in learning new skills. Confidence is gained by doing, taking action and getting involved. The more new experiences your child has, the more confidence he/she will have. Children need to feel loved and capable. Continue building your child's self esteem. It is the best gift you can give to your child and yourself.

#### **DENTAL CARE:**

At three, most children have all their baby teeth. Visiting the dentist is an important part of setting a pattern for taking care of their teeth. Most dentists use the first appointment to let the child see the office and show them what a dentist does. If the child can cooperate, a simple examination of the teeth and taking of routine x-rays may be done.

**SAFETY:**

Use an approved car safety seat. Your child needs to be in a car seat until he is at least 40 pounds. The best location is in the center of the back seat of the car. The best way children learn is by your example, so buckle up.

Keep medicine, cleaning solutions and other poisonous substances in childproof containers, locked up and out of reach. Keep dangerous liquids in their original containers, do not put liquids in soda pop bottles or other containers. Use safety gates on stairways, (top and bottom) and safety guards on windows above the first floor. Keep this number readily available: Arizona Poison Control phone number, 1-800-362-0101 or 626-6016.

Keep unused electrical outlets covered with plastic guards. Children like to stick different objects and fingers into holes they find.

Keep objects and foods away from your child that can cause choking, such as coins, balloons, and small toys, hot dogs that are not cut into very small pieces, peanuts, and hard candy.

Pools should be completely fenced and gates must be locked. Remember a child can drown in the tub, baby pool even a pail of water. Never leave your child alone near water.

**IMMUNIZATIONS:**

Your child's shot record should be up-to-date. Check with your doctor if you have questions.

**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.