

Toddler Tips

A Publication of Suburban Pediatric Clinic

18 MONTH EDITION

Toddler Tips 18 month edition: This month's Toddler Tips will discuss what parents can expect when their baby is around 18 months old.

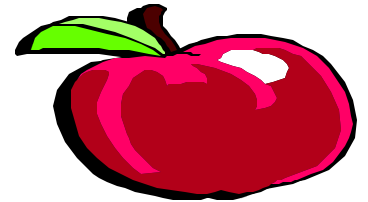
NUTRITION

Mealtime should be a happy time for the family. Offer your child a selection of healthy foods and let her decide how much they will eat. Children will not starve themselves; an appetite slump is normal at this age.

- ♥ Many babies fill up on milk and sugary juices and then eat less at mealtime. Avoid catering to the demands of non nutritious foods. Limit milk consumption to 15-20 ounces a day. Please use whole milk until 2 years of age. Limit juices to 6-8 ounces a day.

CALCIUM INTAKE:

- ♥ From 1-10 years of age children need 800 milligrams (or 3 servings) of calcium a day to help build strong bones and teeth.
- ♥ One cup of milk or yogurt has 300 milligrams of calcium.
- ♥ A slice of cheese has 200 milligrams of calcium.
- ♥ A half cup of calcium fortified orange juice supplies 160 milligrams of calcium. However, because orange juice does not contain Vitamin D or protein it is not a substitute for milk.



IRON INTAKE:

- ♥ Iron is equally important for babies this age to prevent Anemia (iron deficiency).
- ♥ Good sources of iron are spinach, broccoli, other green, leafy vegetables, whole grain breads, pasta, prunes, chicken, fish, red meat, and liver.

HEALTHY SNACKS:

- ♥ Healthy snacks include fresh fruits and vegetables, pretzels, cereals, bagels, low fat yogurt, and turkey and cheese slices.

DEVELOPMENT

At this age, most children walk, climb, say 5-10 words, and understand everything said to them.

- ♥ Please read to your child to stimulate language development. Language is learned very quickly at this age.

POTTY TRAINING

There is no magic age for potty training; most children are physically and emotionally ready between 18-30 months of age. Your baby is ready to potty train when she understands words like 'pee", "wet", or "potty". She is ready when she can follow simple directions, is able to use a potty chair, undresses with little help, goes 2-3 hours during the day with dry diapers, and can indicate through words or body language that she is uncomfortable in wet diapers.

- ♥ Use a potty chair if possible because most children are comfortable with their feet on the floor. This special chair can be kept in the baby's room for reading or playing.
- ♥ Some children are predictable enough that you can take them to the potty at the same time each day, such as after meals, or before bed or bath time.
- ♥ When your baby indicates that she needs to use the potty, take her immediately, but never force her to sit on the chair. Please **DO NOT** criticize, punish, or ridicule your child during potty training. Use only praise, encouragement, and lots of hugs.

HEALTHY TEETH

Be sure to brush your baby's teeth twice a day. You should **NOT** use toothpaste containing fluoride. Be sure to brush the backsides of the front teeth because cavities often begin in this area.

- ♥ At this age, your baby should not be using a bottle, particularly at bedtime as this increases the risk of severe tooth decay and ear infections.

Baby Safety Issues

HOME SAFETY

Please remember that the biggest threat to your baby's life and health are accidents.

- ♥ Please use gates on all staircases and doors. **DO NOT** use a baby walker.
- ♥ Be sure there are plug protectors in **ALL** empty electrical outlets in your home.

POISON CONTROL

Be aware of the poisonous substances in your home that your baby may ingest.

- ♥ Be sure that all medicines and cleaning supplies are locked up and out of your baby's reach.
- ♥ Call our office or the Poison Control Center **IMMEDIATELY** if your baby eats something poisonous. Keep the Poison Control number posted by your telephone.

Poison Control 1.800.222.1222

BURN PROTECTION

- ♥ Be sure to check the hot water temperature in your home. The correct temperature should be less than **120 degrees F.**
- ♥ **DO NOT** carry or hold your baby while cooking or carrying hot foods or liquids.

CHOKING SAFETY

NEVER leave small objects or food within your baby's reach.

- ♥ Do not feed your baby hot dogs, raw carrots, or grapes. Cut food into thin slices to prevent choking.
- ♥ **BE PREPARED:** Ask our office for instructions on choking first aid.

DROWNING SAFETY

NEVER leave your baby alone near any water for any moment. Drowning can happen in the shallowest water.

- ♥ Please remember to empty water from bathtubs, pails, or any other container of water immediately after use. Keep the bathroom door and commode lid closed at all times.
- ♥ If you have a swimming pool, install a fence to separate your house or baby's play area from the swimming pool.

CAR SAFETY

Car crashes are a great risk to your baby's health and life. The correct use of a car seat will prevent injuries and deaths that occur in car crashes.

- ♥ Make sure that your baby's car seat is installed correctly.
- ♥ When your baby reaches 20 pounds AND is 12 months old she may need to be in a toddler safety seat that faces **FORWARD**. This seat should be placed in the **MIDDLE** of the **BACK** seat.
- ♥ Please remember, you **MUST** use your baby's car seat **EVERY** time your baby rides in a car.

NEXT CHECKUP: **24 MONTHS**

Your baby's next checkup is at 24 months of age. Regular **WELL BABY** checkups are done at 12,18, and 24 months. These checkups usually involve immunizations and other preventive health services. Keeping your baby up to date on checkups and immunizations is one of the best things you can do for your baby's health.

PP Please remember to bring your baby's immunization card and insurance or Medicaid card to every visit PP