

with a stethoscope before performing activity on the child.

If several children in the family will be examined, begin with the most cooperative child to model desired behavior.

Involve the child in examination process:

- Provide choices, such as sitting on table or in parent's lap.
- Allow child to handle or hold equipment.
- Encourage child to use equipment on a doll, family member, or examiner.
- Explain each step of the procedure in simple language.

Examine child in a comfortable and secure position:

- Sitting in parent's lap
- Sitting upright if in respiratory distress

Proceed to examine the body in an organized sequence (usually head to toe) with the following exceptions:

- Alter sequence to accommodate needs of different-age children (Table 4-2).

TABLE 4-2

Age-Specific Approaches to Physical Examination During Childhood

Position	Sequence	Preparation
Infant		
Before able to sit alone—supine or prone, preferably in parent's lap; before 4 to 6 months, can place on examining table After able to sit alone—sitting in parent's lap whenever possible; if on table, place with parent in full view	If quiet, auscultate heart, lungs, and abdomen. Record heart and respiratory rates. Palpate and percuss same areas. Proceed in usual head-to-toe	Completely undress if room temperature permits. Leave diaper on male infant. Gain cooperation with distraction, bright objects, rattles, talking. Smile at infant; use soft, gentle voice. Pacify with bottle of sugar water or feeding. Enlist parent's aid for restraining to examine ears, mouth.