



Date: _____

Weight: _____

Height: _____

Head Circumference: _____

Well Child Care at 18 Months

Nutrition

Family meals are important for your baby. Let him eat with you. This helps him learn that eating is a time to be together and talk with others. Don't make mealtime a battle. Let your baby feed themselves. Your child should use a spoon and drink from an open-rimmed cup (not a sippy-cup). Young children should drink 16 to 24 oz. of milk each day to help meet their calcium and vitamin D needs. Milk is also an important source of protein for growth. Offer water especially on very hot days or when the child is playing hard. We do not recommend giving kids at any age juice, it is not necessary. If you do choose to give juice, limit to 4oz daily and always serve with a meal. Help your child explore new flavors and textures in his food. Toddlers this age seldom eat "3 square meals a day", but more likely 1 good meal and multiple smaller meals and snacks. If your child refuses something you've prepared it usually means he is not hungry. Trust your child to determine when he is hungry or full and never encourage him to eat food he did not have for. Your kitchen is not a fast-food restaurant and you don't need to fix another meal if your child refuses what you have already prepared. This only encourages him to be a picky eater.

Development

Children at this age should be learning many new words. You can help your child's vocabulary grow by showing and naming lots of things. Children at this age can engage in pretend play. They will look where you point and will try to get your attention when they want to point something out to you. Children have many different feelings and behaviors such as pleasure, anger, joy, curiosity, warmth, and assertiveness. Praise your child for doing things that you like. Toilet Training: At 18 months, most toddlers are not yet showing signs that they are ready for toilet training. When toddlers report to parents that they have wet or soiled their diaper, they are starting to be aware that they prefer dryness. This is a good sign and you should praise your child. Toddlers are naturally curious about the use of the bathroom by other people. Let them watch you or other family members use the toilet. It is important not to put too many demands on a child or shame the child during toilet training.

Behavior Control

Toddlers sometimes seem out of control, or too stubborn or demanding. At this age, children often say "no". To help children learn about rules:

- Divert and substitute. If a child is playing with something you don't want him to have, replace it with another object or toy that he enjoys. This approach avoids a fight and does not place children in a situation where they'll say "no."
- Teach and lead. Have as few rules as necessary and enforce them. Make rules for the child's safety. If a rule is broken, after a short, clear, and gentle explanation, immediately find a place for

your child to sit alone for 1 minute. It is very important that a "time-out" comes right after a rule is broken.

- Make consequences as logical as possible. For example, if you don't stay in your car seat, the car doesn't go. If you throw your food, you don't get any more and may be hungry.
- Be consistent with discipline. Don't make threats that you cannot carry out. If you say you're going to do it, do it.
- Be warm and positive. Children like to please their parents. Give lots of praise and be enthusiastic. When children misbehave, stay calm and say "We can't do that. The rule is _____. " Then repeat the rule.

Separation and Stranger anxiety

Most toddlers will start to have anxiety in new situations or around new people. They will cling on to their parents as a way to reassure themselves they are safe. This is a normal stage that most toddlers will go through. Reassure them they will be okay.

Reading and Electronic Media

Toddlers have short attention spans, so stories should always be short, simple, and have lots of pictures. The best choices are large-format books that develop one main character through action and activity. Make sure the books have happy, clear-cut endings. Starting healthy media habits now is important, because bad habits are hard to change when children are older. If you choose to introduce digital media at this age, choose high-quality programming or apps, use them together, and limit viewing to less than 1 hour per day. Do not feel pressure to introduce technology. Do not place a TV in your child's bedroom. Using TV to calm fussy toddlers doesn't help them learn way to calm themselves and can lead them to demand media. Use other methods to calm your child, such as distraction, removing them from the trigger, going outside, addressing possible causes of fussiness. (Such as hunger or tiredness), or reading together.

Dental Care

After meals and before bedtime, clean your toddler's teeth. Many children exhibit their independence by demanding to brush their own teeth, but infants and children younger than 4 years may not have the motor skills to do so. When a child can tie their shoes then they are able to brush their own teeth. If you have not made a dental appointment, now is a good time to find a pediatric dentist. You can ask Dr. Fikkert or her staff for recommendations.

Safety Tips

Child-proof the home: Go through every room in your house and remove anything that is valuable, dangerous, or messy. Preventive child-proofing will stop many possible discipline problems. Don't expect a child not to get into things just because you say no. If you have a gun, store it unloaded and locked. Store the ammunition in a separate place that is also locked.

Choking and Suffocation

- Keep plastic bags, balloons, and small hard objects out of reach.
- Cut foods into small pieces.
- Store toys in a chest without a dropping lid.

Fires and Burns

- Keep hot appliances and cords out of reach.
- Don't cook with your child at your feet.
- Keep hot foods and liquids out of reach.
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach.
- Turn your water heater down to 120°F (50°C).

Falls

- Make sure that drawers, furniture, and lamps cannot be tipped over. Do not place furniture (on which children may climb) near windows or on balconies.
- Use stair gates.
- Install window guards on windows above the first floor (unless this is against your local fire codes.)
- Make sure windows are closed or have screens that cannot be pushed out.
- Don't underestimate your child's ability to climb.

Car Safety

- Never leave your child alone in the car.
- The AAP advises parents to keep their toddlers in rear facing car seats until age 2, or until they reach the maximum height and weight for their seat. Please check with manufacture guidelines for further information.
- Use an approved toddler car seat correctly and wear your seat belt.

Pedestrian Safety

- Hold onto your child when you are near traffic.
- Provide a play area where balls and riding toys cannot roll into the street.

Water Safety

- Never leave an infant or toddler in a bathtub alone — NEVER.
- Continuously watch your child around any water, including toilets and buckets. Keep the lids of toilets down. Never leave water in an unattended bucket and store buckets upside down.

Sun Protection

- Always apply Sunscreen with an SPF greater than 15 when your child is outside. Reapply every 2 hours.
- Have your child wear a hat.
- Avoid prolonged time in the sun between 11:00am and 3:00pm.
- Wear Sun protection clothing for summer.

Pets

- You must keep a close eye on both child and pet when they are interacting with each other.
- Try to keep your toddler away from animal feeding areas to reduce the risk of both bites and the ingestion of animal food.
- Because children this age are not old enough to understand the difference between playing with and hurting a pet, interactions between them should be supervised at all times.
- Watch for signs of either your child or pet is becoming anxious or overwhelmed.
- Dog and cat bites are particularly common at this age.

Poisoning

- Keep all medicines, vitamins, cleaning fluids, and other chemicals locked away.
- Put the poison center number on all phones. **1-800-222-1222**
- Buy medicines in containers with safety caps.
- Do not store poisons in drink bottles, glasses, or jars.

Smoking

- Children who live in a house where someone smokes have more respiratory infections. Their symptoms are also more severe and last longer than those of children who live in a smoke-free home.
- If you smoke, set a quit date and stop. Set a good example for your child. If you cannot quit, do NOT smoke in the house or near children.

Immunizations

At the 18-month visit, your baby may receive shots. Children during the first 2 years of life should get a total of 3 flu shots. Ask your healthcare provider about influenza shots if you have questions about them. Your baby may run a fever and be irritable for about 1 day after the shots. Your baby may also have some soreness, redness, and swelling in the area where the shots were given. You may give your child acetaminophen drops in the appropriate dose to prevent fever and irritability. For swelling or soreness, put a wet, warm washcloth on the area of the shots as often and as long as needed for comfort. Call your child's healthcare provider if:

- Your child has a rash or any reaction to the shots other than fever and mild irritability.
- Your child has a fever that lasts more than 36 hours.

Next Visit

Your child's next visit should be at the age of 2 years, and your child may or may not receive vaccines at that visit.

Normal Development: 18 Months Old

Here's what you might see your child doing between the ages of 18 and 24 months.

Daily Activities

- Starts to eat with fork.
- Uses spoon or cup without spilling.
- Enjoys imitating parents.

Motor Skills

- Walks skillfully.
- Enjoys pushing and pulling toys while walking.
- Runs awkwardly and falls a lot.
- Walks backward a short distance.

Cognitive Development (Thinking and Learning)

- Understands that something can exist even when hidden.
- Can picture objects and events mentally.

Language Development

- Speaks from 3 to 50 words.
- Wants to name everything.
- May use a few two-word combinations.
- Repeats familiar and unfamiliar sounds and gestures.

Emotional and Behavioral Development

- Points at objects and looks to see when others point to something.
- May begin to show frustration when not understood.
- May show strong attachment to a toy or blanket.
- May resist bedtime, likes the same routine at bedtime.
- May respond with "no" constantly.
- Likes to show some independence (feeds self, undresses self).
- Starts to develop a self-concept.
- Responds to simple requests ("Bring me your book").

Each child is unique. Some behaviors and physical milestones tend to occur at certain ages, but a wide range of growth and behavior for each age is normal. It is natural for a child to reach some milestones earlier and other milestones later than the general trend. If you have any concerns about your child's own pattern of development, check with your healthcare provider.

Toilet Training Problems, Prevention of

Although your child may not be ready now to start toilet training here are some good suggestions to start introducing the concept.

DO:

1. Change your child's diaper frequently.
2. Teach your child to come to you when his diaper needs to be changed.
3. Let your child watch other children use the toilet or potty chair.
4. Read books about learning to use the toilet to your child.
5. At first, keep the potty chair in the room your child usually plays in. Easy access will greatly increase the chance that he will use it. Consider owning two potty chairs, one for his playroom and one for the bathroom.
6. Teach your child about how the toilet works.
7. Suggest using the toilet or potty chair only if your child gives a cue that he needs to go.
8. Give suggestions, not demands.
9. Give your child an active role and let him do it his way.
10. Be supportive.
11. Keep your sense of humor.
12. Keep the learning process fun. Be positive about any interest your child shows.

DON'T:

1. Don't try to start teaching your child to use the toilet when he is in a stubborn or negative phase.
2. Don't use any kind of punishment or pressure.
3. Don't force your child to sit on a potty chair or keep him on it against his will.
4. Don't flush the toilet while your child is sitting on it.
5. Don't lecture or remind your child.
6. Avoid friction about using the toilet.
7. Avoid battles or showdowns about using the toilet.
8. Don't try to control what you can't control.
9. Never escalate your response, you will always lose.
10. Don't appear over concerned about this normal body function. Be casual and relaxed during your child's learning process.
11. When your child begins to use the toilet, don't expect perfection. Some accidents will probably occur for months.

Toilet Training Your Child: The Basics

What is toilet training?

Your child is toilet trained when, without any reminders, he walks to the potty, pulls down his pants, urinates or passes a bowel movement (BM), and pulls up his pants. Some children will learn to control their bladders first. Others will start with bowel control. Both kinds of control can be worked on simultaneously. Bladder control through the night normally happens several years later than daytime control. The gradual type of toilet training discussed here can usually be completed in 1 to 3 months, if your child is ready.

How can I help my child get ready for toilet training?

Don't begin training until your child is clearly ready. Readiness doesn't just happen. It involves concepts and skills you can begin teaching your child at 18 months of age or earlier. All children can be made ready for toilet training by 3 years, most by 2 1/2 years, many by 2 years and some earlier. Ways to help a child become ready include the following: 18 months: Begin teaching about pee, poop and how the body works.

- Teach the vocabulary (pee, poop, potty, etc.).
- Clarify that everyone makes pee and poop.
- Point out when dogs or other animals are going pee or poop.
- Clarify the body's signals when you observe them: "Your body wants to make some pee or poop."
- Praise your child for passing poop in the diaper.
- Do not refer to poop as dirty or yucky stuff.
- Make changing diapers pleasant for the child so he will come to you.
- Change your child frequently so he will prefer dry diapers.
- Teach your child to come to a parent whenever he is wet or soiled.

21 months: Begin teaching about the potty and toilet.

- Teach what the toilet and potty chair are for ("the pee or poop goes in this special place"). Demonstrate by dumping poop from diapers into the toilet.
- Portray using the toilet and potty chair as a privilege.
- Have him observe toilet-trained children use the toilet or potty chair (having an older toilet-trained sibling can be very helpful).
- Buy a floor-level type potty chair. You want your child's feet to touch the floor when he sits on the potty. This provides leverage for pushing and a sense of security. He also can get on and off whenever he wants to. Take your child with you to buy the potty chair. Make it clear that this is your child's own special chair. Have your child help you put his name on it. Allow your child to decorate it or even paint it a different color.
- Have your child sit on the potty chair for fun. Have your child sit on it fully clothed until he is comfortable with using it as a chair. Have your child use it while eating snacks, playing games, or looking at books. Keep it in the room in which your child usually plays. Never start actual toilet training unless your child clearly has good feelings toward the potty chair. Help the child develop a sense of ownership ("my chair").
- Then, bring his potty chair in the bathroom and have him sit on it (bare-bottom) when you sit on the toilet. Don't allow diapers or pull-ups in the bathroom.

2 years: Begin using teaching aids.

- Read toilet learning books and watch toilet learning videos.
- Help your child pretend she's training a doll or stuffed animal on the potty chair.
- Present underwear as a privilege. Buy special underwear and keep it in a place where the child can see it.

How do I toilet train my child?

1. Encourage practice runs to the potty. A practice run (potty sit) is encouraging your child to walk to the potty and sit there with his diapers or pants off. Your child can then be told, "Try to go pee-pee in the potty". Only do practice runs when your child gives a signal that looks promising, such

as a certain facial expression, grunting, holding the genital area, pulling at his pants, pacing, squatting, or squirming. Other good times are after naps, 2 hours without urinating, or 20 minutes after meals. Say encouragingly, "The poop or pee wants to come out. Let's use the potty". If your child is reluctant to sit on the potty, you may want to read him a story. If your child wants to get up after 1 minute of encouragement, let him get up. Never force your child to sit there. Never physically hold your child there. Even if your child seems to be enjoying it, end each session after 5 minutes unless something is happening. Initially, keep the potty chair in the room your child usually plays in. This easy access greatly increases the chances that he will use it without your asking him. Consider owning 2 potty chairs. During toilet training, children need to wear clothing that's conducive to using the potty. That means one layer, usually the diaper. Avoid shoes and pants. (In the wintertime, turning up the heat is helpful.) Another option (though less effective) is loose sweatpants with an elastic waistband. Avoid pants with zippers, buttons, snaps, or a belt.

2. Praise or reward your child for cooperation or any success. All cooperation with these practice sessions should be praised. For example, you might say, "You are sitting on the potty just like Mommy," or "You're trying real hard to go pee-pee in the potty". If your child urinates into the potty, he can be rewarded with treats such as animal cookies or stickers, as well as praise and hugs. Although a sense of accomplishment is enough for some children, many need treats to stay focused. Big rewards (such as going to the toy store) should be reserved for when your child walks over to the potty on his own, and uses it or asks to go there with you and then uses it. Once your child uses the potty by himself two or more times, you can stop the practice runs. For the following week, continue to praise your child frequently for using the potty. Practice runs and reminders should not be necessary for more than 1 or 2 months.
3. Change your child after accidents. Change your child as soon as it's convenient, but respond sympathetically. Say something like, "You wanted to go pee-pee in the potty, but you went pee-pee in your pants. I know that makes you sad. You like to be dry. You'll get better at this." If you feel a need to be critical, keep it to mild verbal disapproval and use it rarely (for example, "Big boys don't go pee-pee in their pants," or mention the name of another child whom he likes and who is trained). Then change your child into a dry diaper or training pants in as pleasant and non-angry way as possible. Avoid physical punishment, yelling, or scolding. Pressure or force can make a child completely uncooperative.
4. Introduce underpants after your child starts using the potty. Regular underwear can spark motivation. Switch from diapers to underpants after your child is cooperative about sitting on the potty chair and passes urine into the toilet spontaneously 10 or more times. Take your child with you to buy the underwear and make it a reward for his success. Buy loose-fitting ones that he can easily lower and pull up by himself. Once you start using underpants, use diapers only for naps, bedtime and travel outside the home.
5. Plan a bare bottom weekend. If your child is older than 30 months and has successfully used the potty a few times with your help and clearly understands the process, commit 6 hours or a weekend exclusively to toilet training. This can usually lead to a breakthrough. Avoid interruptions or distractions during this time. Younger siblings must spend the day elsewhere. Turn off the TV and do not answer the phone. Success requires monitoring your child during these hours of training. The bare bottom technique means not wearing any diapers, pull-ups, underwear or any clothing below the waist. This causes most children to become acutely aware of their body's plumbing. Children innately dislike pee or poop running down their legs. You and your child should stay in the vicinity of the potty chair. This can be in the kitchen or other room without a carpet. A gate may help your child stay on task. During bare bottom times, supervise your child but refrain from all practice runs and most reminders, allowing the child to learn by trial and error with your support. Create a frequent need to urinate by offering your child lots of her favorite fluids. Have just enough toys and books handy to keep your child playing near the potty chair. Keep the process upbeat with hugs, smiles and good cheer. You are your child's coach and ally.

What if toilet training isn't working?

There are some children who are resistant to toilet training. Your child is considered resistant if after trying to toilet train your child using the method described above:

- Your child is over 2 1/2 years old and has a negative attitude about toilet training.
- Your child is over 3 years old and not daytime toilet trained.
- Your child won't sit on the potty or toilet.
- Your child holds back bowel movements.
- The approach described here isn't working after 6 months.

If your child is resistant to toilet training, ask your healthcare provider for ideas and information about toilet training resistance.

Reference: RelayHealth and Bright Futures 2017

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For any questions or concerns please call our office at 817-417-9001.