



Date: _____

Weight: _____

Height: _____

Blood Pressure: _____/_____

Well Child Care at 4 Years

Nutrition

Your child should always be a part of the family at mealtime. This should be a pleasant time for the family to be together and share stories and experiences. Give small portions of food to your child. If he is still hungry, let him have seconds. Selecting foods from all food groups (meat, dairy, grains, fruits, and vegetables) is a good way to provide a balanced diet. Choose and eat healthy snacks such as cheese, fruit, or yogurt. Televisions should never be on during mealtime.

Development

At this age children usually become more cooperative in their play with other children. They are curious and imaginative. A 4-year old will ask many questions, it is easy to offer too much information. They best understand explanations that are short and to the point, and that refer to the direct experiences of the child. You can also help them develop their language skills by encouraging them to talk with you about their day at preschool, friends, experiences or observations. You may also notice that a child this age is very sensitive. They wear their feelings on their sleeves and are easily encouraged or hurt by what people say to them. Allow privacy while your child is changing clothes or using the bathroom. When your child starts wanting privacy on his own, let him know that you think this is good.

Behavior Control

Breaking rules occasionally occurs at this age. Making children stand in a corner by themselves for 4 minutes is usually an effective way to correct the undesirable behavior. This technique is called time-out. If you have questions about behavior, ask your doctor.

Reading and Electronic Media

It is important to set rules about television watching. Limit total TV and electronic media time to no more than 1 hour per day. Children should not be allowed to watch shows or play games with violence or sexual behaviors. Watch TV with your child and discuss the shows. If your child is on a smart phone or tablet set with your child and watch what they are doing. Websites such as YouTube have fun videos for kids, but a child can easily access adult content. Find parental controls on devices or websites and set them to protect your child. Other activities you can do with your child. Reading, hobbies, and physical activities are good alternatives to TV.

Dental Care

- Brushing teeth regularly after meals and before bedtime is important. Think of a way to make it fun.
- Make sure your child brushes their teeth twice a day with a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste.
- Make an appointment for your child to see the dentist.
- If your child sucks his thumb, ask your doctor or dentist for advice on how to help him stop.

Safety Tips

Keep your child away from knives, power tools, or mowers.

Fires and Burns

- Practice a fire escape plan.
- Check smoke detectors and replace the batteries as needed.
- Keep a fire extinguisher in or near the kitchen.
- Teach your child to never play with matches or lighters.
- Teach your child emergency phone numbers and to leave the house if fire breaks out.
- Turn your water heater down to 120°F (50°C).

Car Safety

- Never leave your child alone in a car.
- Everyone in a car must always wear seat belts or be in an appropriate booster seat or car seat.
- Continue to use a size-appropriate forward-facing car safety seat that is properly installed in the back seat according to the manufacturer's instructions and the vehicle owner's manual until you child reaches the highest weight or height allowed by manufacturer.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

- Teach your child to never ride a tricycle or bicycle in the street.
- All family members should use a bicycle helmet, even when riding a tricycle.
- It is much too early to expect a child to look both ways before crossing the street. Supervise all street crossing.

Poisoning

- Teach your child to never take medicines without supervision and not to eat unknown substances.
- Put the poison center number on all phones. **1-800-222-1222**

Water Safety

- Watch your child constantly when he is around any water.
- Provide "touch supervision" any time your child is in or near water, even small play swimming pools. This means that a parent or responsible adult is within an arm's reach of the child at all times.

- Children should always wear a properly fitted US Coast Guard-approved life jacket when on a boat or other watercraft. Simply blow-up water wings do NOT prevent drowning.

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.
- Watch for signs of either your child or pet is becoming anxious or overwhelmed.
- Make certain that your child knows to avoid stray animals and to treat household pets gently and lovingly.

Strangers

- Teach your child the first and last names of family members.
- Teach your child to never go anywhere with a stranger.
- Teach your child that no adult should tell a child to keep secrets from parents, no adult should show interest in private parts, and no adult should ask a child for help with private parts.

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.
- Teach your child that even though smoking is unhealthy, he should be civil and polite when he is around people who smoke.

Immunizations

Your child will probably receive shots such as:

- DTaP (diphtheria, acellular pertussis, tetanus) shot
- measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)
- chickenpox (varicella)
- polio vaccine.

An annual influenza shot is recommended for children up until 18 years of age. After a shot your child may run a fever and become irritable for about 1 day. Your child may also have some soreness, redness, and swelling where a shot was given. For fever, give your child an appropriate dose of acetaminophen.

For swelling or soreness, put a wet, warm washcloth on the area of the shot as often and as long as needed for comfort. Call your child's healthcare provider immediately if:

- Your child has a fever over 105°F (40.5°C).
- Your child has a severe allergic reaction beginning within 2 hours of the shot (for example, hives, wheezing or noisy breathing, swelling of the mouth or throat).
- Your child has any other unusual reaction.

Next Visit

A once-a-year check-up is recommended. Be sure to check your child's shot records before starting school to make sure he or she has all the required vaccinations. Children should receive an annual flu shot.

Normal Development: 4 Years Old

Physical Development

- Hops, runs, skips, climbs with increasing skill.
- Tires easily.
- Is accident prone.
- Likes making loud noises, but is frightened by unexpected sounds.
- Goes to the bathroom without help.
- Makes designs and draws recognizable objects.
- Can use blunt scissors.
- Dresses self (with exception of shoes).

Emotional Development

- Sometimes still acts like a baby.
- Shows new fears (becoming aware of more dangers).
- Enjoys silliness.

Social Development

- Refers to parents as final authority.
- Continues to test parental limits.
- Uses "naughty" words to see how others react.
- Is ready for group activities.
- Talks "with" another child, but does not listen to what other child says.
- Is comfortable with other children, but shares grudgingly.
- Tattles and name-calls.
- Imitates adults.

Mental Development

- Is more likely to solve problems through words than aggressive action.
- Has a vocabulary of about 1,500 to 2,000 words.

- Speaks in 4 to 5 word sentences.
- Likes funny, exaggerated stories.
- Can count to 5.
- Identifies some shapes and colors.
- Can understand some concepts of time (yesterday, today, and tomorrow).
- Often asks "why" questions.
- Usually can put toys and materials away without adult help.
- Insists on finishing an activity or project.
- Likes to help with simple tasks.
- Starts to know difference between right and wrong.
- Shows growing ability to tell real-life from make-believe.
- Tells tall tales, but cannot always tell the difference between truth and lies.
- Believes the only viewpoint is his or her own.
- Believes 2 unrelated events can have a cause-effect relationship.

These guidelines show general progress through the developmental stages rather than fixed requirements for normal development at specific ages. It is perfectly 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.

Reference: RelayHealth and Bright Futures 2017

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