

Name _____

Date _____ Height _____

Weight _____ Head Circumference _____



Well Child TIPS FOR TAKING CARE OF YOUR 18-MONTH-OLD

CHILDREN ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING. And while you as parents can't anticipate every change, these Well Child Tips can prepare you for what lies ahead and help you raise a healthy and safe child.

SAFETY

- Sometimes your toddler may want to do things his own way. This is a healthy sign that he is learning to be independent. But if he resists sitting in his child safety seat, treat this like any life-threatening behavior, such as reaching for the stove. Firmly let him know that he must buckle up any time he's in a car. Pull over if necessary. Be a good role model and always buckle up, too! For more information on seatbelt safety, please visit our Web site at www.choa.org. Or stop by the nearest Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Immediate Care center.
- Lawnmowers, electric garden tools and other outdoor equipment are best used when your toddler is not around. Toddlers move quickly and can jump in the way before you know it. Never let a child ride on a lawnmower, even if it is with you.
- When your child is 35 inches tall, it is time for him to sleep in a bed. A child less than 35 inches may be ready for a bed if he tries to climb out of his crib. Put his mattress on the floor at first or use bed rails so he will not fall far if he rolls out of bed. A closed door or a safety gate will help keep him from leaving the room at night.
- Toddlers love to climb. Cushions, bookcases and drawers make handy ladders. Put things that can hurt your child into locked cabinets. Store his toys close to the ground so he will not need to climb to reach them.
- Always stay with your toddler when he is bathing. Toddlers can hurt themselves and possibly drown in the bathtub by trying to crawl and/or stand up. Use a rubber mat in the bathtub to keep him from slipping. Drain the tub when his bath is done so he will not return later and crawl back in. For more information on water safety, please visit our Web site at www.choa.org. Or stop by the nearest Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Immediate Care center.
- If you have any questions about immunizations, be sure to discuss them with your child's healthcare provider. Following a regular immunization schedule is very important for your child's health.
- Going forward from year 2000 models, most cars will be equipped with an attachment mounting in the rear seat area for a tether strap, which is an adjustable strap attached to the upper back of a forward-facing child safety seat. When properly used, a top tether strap reduces risk of injury by limiting the movement of a child's head in a forward crash. Check with the manufacturers to see if previous model seats and cars can be fitted with top tether attachments.

NUTRITION

- Include your toddler in family meals. He will eat better if you are with him and will learn a lot from you as his role model.
- Toddlers learn to like new foods by becoming very familiar with them. If your child rejects a new food the family likes, continue to introduce it by putting a very small amount on his plate, but let him know that it is his choice if he eats it or not. Do not worry if he puts it in his mouth and takes it back out again. He might swallow it next time.
- Limit fruit juice to 4-6 ounces per day.



DEVELOPMENT

- Toddlers like to make some decisions; this helps them feel independent. Give your child choices between two options that are both OK with you.
- Your toddler probably likes to say, “No!” – even to things he wants. This is another way of showing his growing independence.
- Your toddler may be able to say at least 10 words. By 21 months, he may think everything belongs to him. He will say “mine” a lot. This is normal.
- Soon, your toddler will be able to walk up stairs holding just one of your hands.

PARENTING

- Tantrums occur because toddlers are not able to use words to describe their feelings. They happen more often when your child is tired, hungry or bored. When your child has a tantrum, keep him safe, but ignore his behavior. He will learn that a tantrum is not the right way to get your attention. Help him learn to identify his feelings. Say, “You seem angry.” Soon he will be able to tell you he’s angry instead of using a tantrum or crying.
- Discipline means teaching. Let your child know when he is doing something you like by giving him lots of praise. Give him a simple explanation when he does something wrong, such as, “No, we do not hit because it hurts.”
- Listen to your child when he speaks. Take time to answer his questions. You are his favorite teacher.
- Children will copy what you do. Say “please” and “thank you,” and your child will too!

NEXT VISIT _____

Until your next appointment, you may call your child’s healthcare provider if you have any questions about keeping your child safe and healthy. If your child’s healthcare provider is unavailable, call the Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta pediatric advice line at 404.250.kids or check the Children’s Web site at www.choa.org for more information.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS _____

NOTE: These tips are just a guide and do not give you all the information you need to raise a healthy and safe child. Remember that children develop and grow at different rates and you know your child best. If you have any questions or concerns, be sure to ask your child’s healthcare provider.

This educational material is made possible through generous funding from The Junior League of Cobb-Marietta, Inc.

