

Healthy Kids

18 Months

WHAT YOUR BABY CAN DO

At this age your baby can probably:

Walk...

climb...

Pick up small objects...

Say nonsense words, maybe a few real words...

Understand his name and come when called...

Remember an object once it's out of sight...

Drink from a cup (may need help holding the cup)...

Use a spoon...

WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR TODDLER

Play with her

Get her some fat crayons to color with. She may like playing with a ball.

Spend time outside

Give her a chance to run and climb safely.

Read to your child

The more you read to her the better she will learn language. Even pointing to pictures in a magazine and describing them is helpful. Reading is also a good time to be close to your child.

Watch her

At this age she is very active but doesn't understand dangers, like water, cars, steps and the oven.

Hold her

Don't forget to hug your child and tell her you love her.

SAFETY

Every day a child is killed from playing with a handgun. Any gun at home is unsafe for all household members. Don't keep guns at home! If you do have a gun, use trigger guards. Store ammunition in a separate locked place and make sure the gun is locked up!

At this age, your child is probably very active! You must make sure that he has a safe place in which to play and explore. Make sure that you:

- use a car seat every time your child rides in the car
- never leave your child alone in a car or alone in the house
- make sure your home is safety-proofed (see "Healthy Kids' 6 Month Issue")
- supervise all play outdoors

Children this age do not understand danger or remember "no". Never leave your toddler alone in or near a swimming pool, bathtub, ditch, cesspool, well or bathroom. Also, never leave a partially filled bucket around. Knowing how to "swim" does not make a child water-safe at this age!

Remember, accidents cause more deaths of children than all childhood diseases put together. You can prevent most of these accidents. **THINK SAFETY!**

IT'S POTTY TIME

Tips on Toilet Training

Are you starting to think about toilet training your child? Or have you already tried? It can be a hard job! Here are some tips that might make it easier.

Wait until he is ready. Just as some children are ready to walk earlier than others; some children are ready to be toilet trained earlier. Forcing your child to try before he is ready will just make it harder for both of you!

You may notice that your child is dry after his nap, or that he is unhappy with soiled diapers.

Let your child get used to the potty chair before you start training. Just put in the bathroom and tell him what it is for. If he wants to sit on it or play with it, let him.

Don't make a big deal out of it. Going to the bathroom is natural. If you make a big fuss over it, there will be trouble.

Reward successes with praise and perhaps a cookie or cracker. Never punish for "accidents".

Try putting your child on the toilet about 15 minutes after eating or drinking something.

Let your child watch you or an older brother or sister using the toilet.

Ask him often if he needs to go to the bathroom.

Don't try nighttime training until daytime training is going well.

Ideas from other parents...

Here are some ideas that other parents have found work well in toilet training:

Get some gold star stickers (or other stickers) and a piece of paper. Every time your child remembers to use the toilet, put a star on the paper. Put the paper somewhere he can see it, like on the refrigerator.

Get some underpants with Winnie-the-Pooh or Superman or some other favorite friend to them. Tell your child "not to let Winnie get wet"!

Some parents offer a reward for being toilet trained. For example, being able to swim on the big swimming pool.

FEEDING FACTS

At this age, your child may be very choosy about food. Sometimes, he may eat a lot of a meal. Other times he may eat very little. Don't worry about how much he eats each time (unless he never seems to eat much, if that's the case, ask your doctor about it). Just make sure that when he does eat, he eats healthy and balanced foods. And remember, variety is important.

Your child should eat what the family is eating. You shouldn't make "special" foods just for him. If he won't eat what you are eating, set it aside. When he is hungry, give him the same food again. Starting "special" foods now will just bring trouble later.

Mealtimes are more than just for eating. They are times for the family to be together. Even if your child is not eating, encourage him to stay at the table until the family is finished.

HELPING YOUR CHILD LEARN

Opposites And Description

Your child is at a good age to learn about opposites. Take some time to teach her the difference between:

HOT and COLD

IN and OUT

UP and DOWN

BIG and LITTLE

WET and DRY

It is also important that you describe things to your child. Instead of saying, "Look at the dog", say, "look at the big brown dog". Or, instead of saying "Here are some sweet potatoes for lunch", say, "Here are some sweet potatoes for lunch, they are smooth and orange". This will help your child learn language better and will help her talk and write better as she gets older.

Children don't learn how to talk unless people talk to them and teach them. Help your child learn to talk well

by spending time talking with her. Encourage her to ask questions and answer them as best you can!

Colors And Numbers

Now is a good time to start teaching your child colors and numbers. Count out loud as you show her things. Mealtimes are good times for this. You might say, "Here are three crackers: one, two, three", and count them out as you give them to her, one by one. As she gets older, you can ask her to tell you how many of something there are, like plates on the table or toothbrushes in the bathroom.

Start teaching her colors as well. As you put on her blue shirt, say, "This is your blue shirt". You might then show her something else that is blue, like a chair or curtain. As she gets older, ask her to tell you what color something is, like her shirt or her cup or someone else's shirt.

THINGS YOU MAY BE WORRIED ABOUT

Terrible Twos

As your baby becomes a toddler, he will learn to say "no". Often this is called the "terrible twos." But it can start well before your child is 2 years old.

The "terrible twos" can be hard time for parents. Be patient; it is a normal part of your child's development and it will pass. Your child is learning to be his own person and to express himself. Although he may say "no" a lot, he probably means it much less.

How can you deal with the terrible twos?

The best way is not to pay much attention to negative behavior. If you fuss a lot over his "no's", he will say them all the more. Instead, try to avoid questions with yes/no answers. For example, instead of asking, "Do you want a banana", ask "do you want a banana or an apple"? Also, remember to keep your sense of humor. Remember, your child is just trying to learn who he is.

Be specific

Do not ask your child, "Do you want to get dressed now"? The child's natural response will be "no". Instead, state, "It is time to get dressed. Do you want to put your shirt on first or your pants? Shall we put the sock on this foot or that one?" Another example: "It's time to end your bath. Do you want to get out before I drain the water from the tub or after"? At a meal: "Here is your toast. Do you want it cut into little pieces or big ones"? Only offer two choices. Too many can make a child frustrated.

POISON CONTROL CENTER

1-800-222-1222

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Before her next checkup, your child will probably be able to:

walk up and down stairs...
turn the pages of a book...
feed herself fairly well...
open doors...
kick a ball...
jump...

Take time to be with her. Read to her, play with her, or just hold her and love her. All too soon she will be grown up!

We encourage you to visit our website at:
www.westside-pediatrics.com

Revised 7/2014