

Lakeside Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine

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## Well Child Care at 15 Months

### **Nutrition**

Your child should be learning to feed himself. He will use his fingers and maybe start using a spoon. This will be messy. Make sure you cut food into small pieces so that your child won't choke. Children need healthy snacks like cheese, fruit, and vegetables. Do not use food as a reward.

By now, most toddlers should be using a cup only. If your child is still using a bottle, it will soon start to cause problems with his teeth and might cause ear infections. A child at this age will be sad to give up a bottle, so try to replace it with another treasured item - perhaps a teddy bear or blanket. Never let a baby take a bottle to bed.

### **Development**

Toddlers are very curious and want to be the boss. This is normal. If they are safe, this is a time to let your child explore new things. As long as you are there to protect your child, let him satisfy his curiosity. Stuffed animals, toys for pounding, pots, pans, measuring cups, empty boxes, and Nerf balls are some examples of toys your child may enjoy.

Toddlers may want to imitate what you are doing. Sweeping, dusting, or washing play dishes can be fun for children.

### **Behavior Control**

Toddlers start to have temper tantrums at about this age. Trying to reason with or punish your child may actually make the tantrum last longer. It is best to make sure your toddler is in a safe place and then ignore the tantrum. You can best ignore by not looking directly at him and not speaking to him or about him to others when he can hear what you are saying. At a later time, find things that are praiseworthy about your child. Let him know that you notice good qualities and behaviors.

### **Reading and Electronic Media**

Reading to your child should be a part of every day. Children that have books read to them learn more quickly. Choose books with interesting pictures and colors. Children at this age may ask to read the same book over and over. This repetition is a natural part of learning.

It is important to set rules about television watching. Limit total TV time to no more than 1 hour per day. It is best to watch a show with your child and talk with her about the show.

## **Dental Care**

After meals and before bedtime, clean your toddler's teeth.

You may want to make an appointment for your child to see the dentist for the first time.

## **Safety Tips**

### **Choking and Suffocation**

- Keep plastic bags, balloons, and small hard objects out of reach.
- Use only unbreakable toys without sharp edges or small parts that can come loose.
- Cut foods into small pieces. Avoid foods on which a child might choke (popcorn, peanuts, hot dogs, chewing gum).

### **Fires and Burns**

- Keep lighters and matches out of reach.
- Don't let your child play near the stove.
- Use the back burners on the stove with the pan handles out of reach.
- Turn the water heater down to 120°F (49°C).

### **Car Safety**

- Never leave your child alone in the car.
- Use an approved toddler car seat correctly and wear your seat belt.

### **Pedestrian Safety**

- Hold onto your child when you are around traffic.
- Supervise outside play areas.

### **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 lids of toilets down. Never leave water in an unattended bucket. Store buckets upside down.

### **Poisoning**

- Keep all medicines, vitamins, cleaning fluids, and other chemicals locked away.
- Put the poison center number on all phones.
- 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. Ask your healthcare provider for help in quitting. If you cannot quit, do NOT smoke in the house or near children.

### **Immunizations**

At the 15-month visit, your child may receive shots.

Children over 6 months of age should receive an annual flu shot. Children during the first two years of life should get a total of three flu shots. Ask your healthcare provider about influenza shots if you have questions about them.

Your child may run a fever and be irritable for about 1 day and may have soreness, redness, and swelling in the area where the shots were given. You may give acetaminophen or ibuprofen 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 to provide comfort.

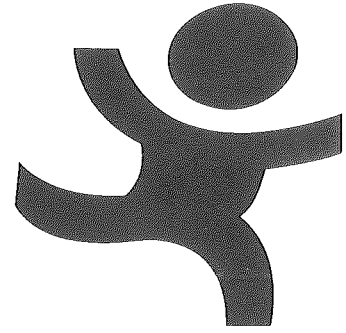
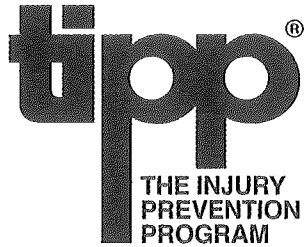
Call your child's healthcare provider if:

- 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.

A small number of children get a rash and fever 7 to 21 days after the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) or the varicella vaccines. The rash is usually on the main body area and lasts 2 to 3 days. Call your healthcare provider within 24 hours if the rash lasts more than 3 days or gets itchy. Call your child's provider **immediately** if the rash changes to purple spots.

### **Next Visit**

Your child's next visit should be at the age of 18 months. Bring your child's shot card to all visits.



# 1 TO 2 YEARS

## Safety for Your Child

Did you know that injuries are the leading cause of death of children younger than 4 years in the United States? Most of these injuries can be prevented.

Often, injuries happen because parents are not aware of what their children can do. At this age your child can *walk, run, climb, jump*, and *explore* everything. Because of all the new things he or she can do, this stage is a very dangerous time in your child's life. It is your responsibility to protect your child from injury. Your child cannot understand danger or remember "no" while exploring.

### Firearm Hazards

Children in homes where guns are present are in more danger of being shot by themselves, their friends, or family members than of being injured by an intruder. It is best to keep all guns out of the home. **Handguns are especially dangerous.** If you choose to keep a gun, keep it unloaded and in a locked place, with the ammunition locked separately. Ask if the homes where your child visits or is cared for have guns and how they are stored.



### Poisonings

Children continue to explore their world by putting everything in their mouths, even if it doesn't taste good. Your child can *open doors and drawers, take things apart*, and *open bottles* easily now, so you must use safety caps on all medicines and toxic household products. **Keep the safety caps on** at all times or find safer substitutes to use. Contact your Poison Center for more information.

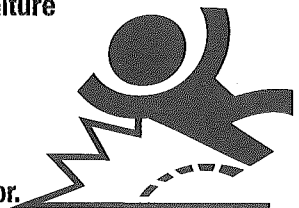


Your child is now able to get into and on top of everything. Be sure to keep all household products and medicines completely out of sight and reach. Never store lye drain cleaners in your home. Keep all products in their original containers.

**If your child does put something poisonous into his or her mouth, call the Poison Help Line immediately. Attach the Poison Help Line number (1-800-222-1222) to your phone. Do not make your child vomit.**

### Falls

To prevent serious falls, lock the doors to any dangerous areas. **Use gates on stairways** and **install operable window guards** above the first floor. **Remove sharp-edged furniture** from the room your child plays and sleeps in. At this age your child will walk well and start to climb, jump, and run as well. A chair left next to a kitchen counter, table, or window allows your child to climb to dangerously high places. Remember, your child does not understand what is dangerous.



**If your child has a serious fall or does not act normally after a fall, call your doctor.**

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



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## Burns

The kitchen is a dangerous place for your child during meal preparation. Hot liquids, grease, and hot foods spilled on your child will cause serious burns. A **safer place for your child** while you are cooking, eating, or unable to give him your full attention is the **playpen, crib, or stationary activity center, or buckled into a high chair**. It's best to keep your child out of the kitchen while cooking.

Children who are learning to walk will grab anything to steady themselves, including hot oven doors, wall heaters, or outdoor grills. Keep your child out of rooms where there are hot objects that may be touched or put a barrier around them.

Your child will *reach* for your hot food or cup of coffee, so don't leave them within your child's reach. **NEVER carry your child and hot liquids at the same time.** You can't handle both.

**If your child does get burned, immediately put cold water on the burned area. Keep the burned area in cold water for a few minutes to cool it off. Then cover the burn loosely with a dry bandage or clean cloth. Call your doctor for all burns. To protect your child from tap water scalds, the hottest temperature at the faucet should be no more than 120°F. In many cases you can adjust your water heater.**

**Make sure you have a working smoke alarm on every level of your home, especially in furnace and sleeping areas. Test the alarms every month. It is best to use smoke alarms that use long-life batteries, but if you do not, change the batteries at least once a year.**

## Drowning

At this age your child loves to play in water. **NEVER leave your child alone in or near a bathtub, pail of water, wading or swimming pool, or any other water, even for a moment.** Empty all buckets after each use. Keep the bathroom doors closed. Your child can drown in less than 2 inches of water. Knowing how to swim does NOT mean your child is safe near or in water. Stay within an arm's length of your child around water.

If you have a swimming pool, fence it on all 4 sides with a fence at least 4 feet high, and be sure the gates are self-latching. Most children drown when they wander out of the house and fall into a pool that is not fenced off from the house. You cannot watch your child every minute while he or she is in the house. It only takes a moment for your child to get out of your house and fall into your pool.

## And Remember Car Safety

**Car crashes are a great danger** to your child's life and health. The crushing forces to your child's brain and body in a crash or sudden stop, even at low speeds, can cause severe injuries or death. **To prevent these injuries USE a car safety seat EVERY TIME** your child rides in the car. Your child should ride rear-facing until she is at least a year old AND weighs at least 20 pounds. It is even better for her to ride rear-facing to the highest weight and/or height her car safety seat allows. Be sure that the safety seat is installed correctly. Read and follow the instructions that come with the car safety seat and the instructions for using car safety seats in the owners' manual of your car. **The safest place for all infants and children to ride is in the back seat.**

**Do not leave your child alone in the car. Keep vehicles and their trunks locked. There are dangers involved with leaving children in a car; death from excess heat may occur very quickly in warm weather in a closed car.**

Always **walk behind your car** to be sure your child is not there before you back out of your driveway. You may not see your child behind your car in the rearview mirror.

**Remember, the biggest threat to your child's life and health is an injury.**

From Your Doctor

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The information in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on the individual facts and circumstances.