

Well Child Care at 2 Years

Nutrition

Family meals are important for your child. They teach your child that eating is a time to be together and talk with others. Letting your child eat with you makes her feel like part of the family. Let your child feed herself. Your toddler will get better at using the spoon, with fewer and fewer spills. It is good to let your child help choose what foods to eat. Be sure to give her only healthy foods to choose from. For many children, this is the time to switch from whole milk to 2% milk. Televisions should never be on during mealtime.

It is very important for your child to be completely off a bottle. Ask your doctor for help if she is still using one.

Development

Spend time teaching your child how to play. Encourage imaginative play and sharing of toys, but don't be surprised that 2-year-olds usually do not want to share toys with anyone else.

Mild stuttering is common at this age. It usually goes away on its own by the age of 4 years. Do not hurry your child's speech. Ask your doctor about your child's speech if you are worried.

Toilet Training

Some children at this age are showing signs that they are ready for toilet training. When your child starts reporting wet or soiled diapers to you, this is a sign that your child prefers to be dry. Praise your child for telling you. Toddlers are naturally curious about other people using the bathroom. If your child seems curious, let him go to the bathroom with you. Buy a potty chair and leave it in a room in which your child usually plays. It is important not to put too many demands on the child or shame the child about toilet training. When your child does use the toilet, let him know how proud you are.

Behavior Control

At this age, children often say "no" or refuse to do what you want them to do. This normal phase of development involves testing the rules that parents make. Parents need to be consistent in following through with reasonable rules. Your rules should not be too strict or too lenient. Enforce the rules fairly every time. Be gentle but firm with your child even when the child wants to break a rule. Many parents find this age difficult, so ask your doctor for advice on managing behavior.

Here are some good methods for helping 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. These rules should be rules

important 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 2 minutes. It is very important that a "time-out" comes immediately after a rule is broken.

- Make consequences as logical as possible. Remember that encouragement and praise are more likely to motivate a young child than threats and fear. Do not threaten a consequence that you do not carry out. If you say there is a consequence for misbehavior and the child misbehaves, carry through with the consequence gently.
- 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.

Reading and Electronic Media

Children learn reading skills while watching you read. They start to figure out that printed symbols have certain meanings. Young children love to participate directly with you and the book. They like to open flaps, ask questions, and make comments. It is important to set rules about television watching. Limit total TV time to no more than 1 hour per day.

Dental Care

- Brushing teeth regularly after meals is important. Think up a game and make brushing fun.
- Make an appointment for your child to see the dentist.

Safety Tips

Child-proof the home. Go through every room in your house and remove anything that is either 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.

Fires and Burns

- Practice a fire escape plan.
- Check smoke detectors. Replace the batteries if necessary.
- Check food temperatures carefully. They should not be too hot.
- Keep hot appliances and cords out of reach.
- Keep electrical appliances out of the bathroom.
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach.
- Don't allow your child to use the stove, microwave, hot curlers, or iron.
- Turn your water heater down to 120°F (50°C).

Falls

- Teach your child not to climb on furniture or cabinets. Do not place furniture (on which children may climb) near windows or on balconies.
- Install window guards on windows above the first floor (unless this is against your local fire codes.)
- Lock doors to dangerous areas like the basement.

Car Safety

- Use an approved toddler car seat correctly.
- Sometimes toddlers may not want to be placed in car seats. Gently but consistently put your child into the car seat every time you ride in the car.
- Give the child a toy to play with once in the seat.
- Parents wear seat belts.
- Never leave your child alone in a car.

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

- Continuously watch your child around any water.

Poisoning

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

Smoking

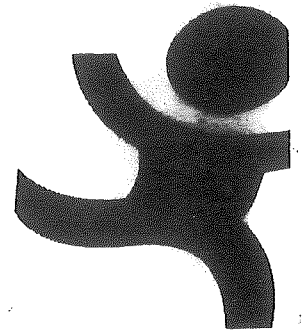
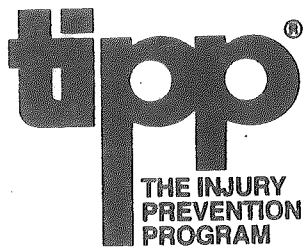
- Children who live in a house where someone smokes have more respiratory infections. Their symptoms are also more severe and last longer than those of children who live in a smoke-free home.
- If you smoke, set a quit date and stop. Set a good example for your child. If you cannot quit, do NOT smoke 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 Routine infant vaccinations are usually completed before this age. However some children may need to catch up on recommended shots at this visit. Occasionally a second HEP A vaccine is given at this age. An annual influenza shot is recommended for children up until 18 years of age. Ask your doctor if you have any questions about whether your child needs any vaccines.

Next Visit

A check-up at 2 1/2 years is recommended. Before starting school your child will need more vaccinations. Bring your child's shot card to all visits.

2 to 4 Years



2 TO 4 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. Children *learn fast*, and before you know it your child will be *jumping, running, riding a tricycle, and using tools*. Your child is at special risk for injuries from falls, drowning, poisons, burns, and car crashes. Your child doesn't understand dangers or remember "no" while playing and exploring.

Falls

Because your child's abilities are so great now, he or she will find an endless variety of dangerous situations at home and in the neighborhood.

Your child can fall off play equipment, out of windows, down stairs, off a bike or tricycle, and off anything that can be climbed on. **Be sure the surface under play equipment is soft enough to absorb a fall.** Use safety-tested mats or loose-fill materials (shredded rubber, sand, wood chips, or bark) maintained to a depth of at least 9 inches underneath play equipment. Install the protective surface at least 6 feet (more for swings and slides) in all directions from the equipment.

Lock the doors to any dangerous areas. **Use gates on stairways and install operable window guards** above the first floor. Fence in the play yard. **If your child has a serious fall or does not act normally after a fall, call your doctor.**

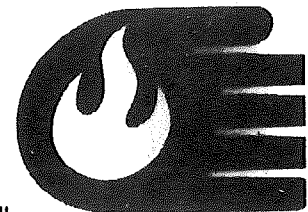
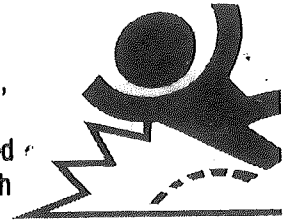
Firearm Hazards

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. If you choose to keep a gun, keep it unloaded and in a locked place, with the ammunition locked separately. **Handguns are especially dangerous.** Ask if the homes where your child visits or is cared for have guns and how they are stored.

Burns

The kitchen can be a dangerous place for your child, especially when you are cooking. If your child is underfoot, hot liquids, grease, and hot foods can spill on him or her and cause serious burns. Find something safe for your child to do while you are cooking.

Remember that kitchen appliances and other hot surfaces such as irons, ovens, wall heaters, and outdoor grills can burn your child long after you have finished using them.



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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.

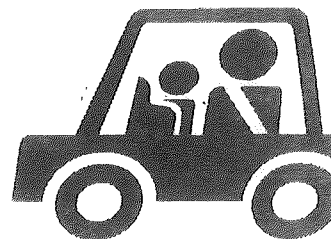
Make sure you have a working smoke alarm on every level of your home, especially in furnace and sleeping areas. Test the alarms every month. It is best to use smoke alarms that use long-life batteries, but if you do not, change the batteries at least once a year.



Poisonings

Your child will be able to *open* any drawer and *climb* anywhere curiosity leads. Your child may *swallow anything* he or she finds. Use only household products and medicines that are absolutely necessary and keep them safely capped and out of sight and reach. Keep all products in their original containers.

If your child does put something poisonous in 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.



And Remember Car Safety

Car crashes are the greatest danger to your child's life and health. The crushing forces to your child's brain and body in a collision or sudden stop, even at low speeds, can cause injuries or death. To prevent these injuries, correctly USE a car safety seat EVERY TIME your child is in the car. If your child weighs more than the highest weight allowed by the seat or if his or her ears come to the top of the car safety seat, use a belt-positioning booster seat.

The safest place for all children to ride is in the back seat. In an emergency, if a child must ride in the front seat, move the vehicle seat back as far as it can go, away from the air bag.

Do not allow your child to play or ride a tricycle in the street. Your child should play in a fenced yard or playground. Driveways are also dangerous. Walk behind your car before you back out of your driveway to be sure your child is not behind your car. You may not see your child through the rearview mirror.

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

From Your Doctor

Lakeside Pediatric
980 W. Ironwood Dr., Ste. 302
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
(208) 292-KIDS (292-5437)
(208) 292-5441 Fax

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