

# Health and Wellness: 2 Years

## Development

At this age, your child may:

- climb and go down steps alone, one step at a time, holding the railing or holding someone's hand
- open doors and climb on furniture
- use a cup and spoon well
- kick a ball
- throw a ball overhand
- take off clothing
- stack five or six blocks
- have a vocabulary of at least 20 to 50 words, make two-word phrases and call himself or herself by name
- respond to two-part verbal commands
- show interest in toilet training
- enjoy imitating adults
- show interest in helping get dressed, and washing and drying his or her hands
- use toys well.

## Feeding Tips

- Let your child feed himself or herself. It will be messy, but this is another step toward independence.
- Give your child healthful snacks like fruits and vegetables.

- Do not let your child eat non-food things such as dirt, rocks or paper. Call the clinic if your child will not stop this behavior.
- Your child needs at least 700 mg of calcium and 600 IU of vitamin D each day.
- Milk is an excellent source of calcium and vitamin D.

## Sleep

- You may move your child from a crib to a regular bed. This is important if your child climbs out of the crib.
- Your child may or may not take naps.
- He or she may “fight” sleep as a way of controlling his or her surroundings. Continue your regular nighttime routine: bath, brushing teeth and reading. This will help your child take charge of the nighttime process.
- Praise your child for positive behavior.
- Let your child talk about nightmares. Provide comfort and reassurance.
- If your child has night terrors, he or she may cry, look terrified, be confused and look glassy-eyed. This can last up to 15 minutes. He or she should fall asleep after the episode.

It's common if your child doesn't remember what happened in the morning. Night terrors are not a problem. Try to not let your child get too tired before bed.

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## Physical Activity

- Your child needs at least 60 minutes of active playtime each day.
- Physical activity helps build strong bones and muscles, lowers your child's risk of certain diseases (such as diabetes), increases flexibility, and increases self-esteem.
- Watch your child during any physical activity. Or better yet, join in!

## Safety

- Use an approved car seat for the height and weight of your baby every time he or she rides in a vehicle. The car seat must be properly secured in the back seat.
- The car seat should be rear-facing (facing the rear window) until your baby is at least 2 years old. Ideally your baby should continue to be rear-facing until he or she passes the height and weight limits for his or her convertible (toddler) car seat.
- Car seat straps should fit snugly against your baby.
- Layer blankets or car seat covers over your baby as needed for warmth. Snowsuits are not necessary.
- Be a good role model for your child. Do not talk or text on your cellphone while driving.
- Protect your child from falls, burns, drowning, choking and other accidents.
- Keep all medicines, cleaning supplies and poisons out of your child's reach.
- Call the poison control center (1-800-222-1222) or your health care provider for directions in case your child swallows poison. Have these numbers handy by your telephone or program them into your phone.
- Do not leave your child alone in the car or the house, even for a minute.
- Do not let your child play with plastic bags or latex balloons.
- Push chairs all the way to the table so your child can't climb.

- Always watch your child when playing outside near a street.
- Make a safe play area, if possible.
- Always watch your child near water. "Knowing how to swim" does not make him or her safe in the water.
- Lock up any poisons or toxic substances.
- Do not let your child run around while eating.
- Give your child safe toys. Do not let him or her play with toys that have small or sharp parts.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting your child to 1 hour or less of high-quality programs each day. Watch these programs with your child to help him or her better understand them.

## What Your Child Needs

- Read to your child each day. Set aside a few quiet minutes every day for sharing books together. This time should be free of television, texting and other distractions.
- **Never shake or hit your child.** If you think you are losing control, make sure your child is safe and take a 10-minute time out. If you are still not calm, call a friend, neighbor or relative to come over and help you. If you have no other options, call your local crisis nursery or First Call for Help at 651-291-0211 or dial 211.

## Dental Care

- Make regular dental appointments for cleanings and checkups starting at age 3 or earlier if there are questions or concerns. (Your child may need fluoride supplements if you have well water.)
- Brush your child's teeth one to two times each day with a soft-bristled toothbrush. You do not need to use toothpaste. If you do, use a very small amount. Let your child play with the toothbrush after brushing.

## Eye Exam

- The American Public Health Association recommends that your child get an eye exam at 2 years.
- Talk with your child's health care provider if you have questions.

## Lab Work

Your child may need to have his or her lead levels checked:

- Lead – This is a blood test to look for high levels of lead in the blood. Lead is a metal that can get into a child's body from many things. Evidence shows that lead can be harmful to a child if the level is too high.

## Immunizations (Shots) Today

Your child may receive this shot at this time:

- influenza.

Talk with your health care provider for information about giving acetaminophen (Tylenol®) before and after your child's immunizations.

## Your Child's Next Well Checkup

- Your child's next well checkup will be at age 2 ½.
- Your child may receive this shot at this time:
  - influenza.

Talk with your health care provider for information about giving acetaminophen (Tylenol®) before and after your child's immunizations.