

Well Baby Visit

1 Year

Weight_____

Length_____

Development: This is the age of exploration, the beginning of the run-about stage of childhood. Most one-year-olds can get around by "cruising" while holding on to furniture, and independent walking (and running) will be coming soon, if it hasn't already started. Toddlers love to practice their new mobility skills, and will climb whenever given the chance. These skills are imperfect, however, and many toddlers sport bruises on their foreheads for a few months due to frequent falls.

Language skills are showing more growth at this age. The vocabulary of most one-year-olds consists of two or three words, including Mama and Dada. The toddler understands more words than can be spoken, and can start to respond to simple requests, like "Wave bye-bye", or "Give me that", accompanied by the appropriate gesture. You can help your child's language development by playing "labeling" games. Point to objects and name them while dressing, feeding or playing with him or her. Soon your child may be pointing to things and asking "Whazzat?" or something equivalent. This is also a good time to introduce books-- sturdy ones with pictures of simple objects for naming and pointing games.

Toddlers typically start to develop more definite ideas about what they like or don't want, and may be rather negativistic. Dressing and diaper changes can be a real challenge at this age! An important task of the toddler years is the development of self-confidence, and it's important that he or she be allowed to play and explore freely without a lot of hand slapping and a stream of "no-no's". The more you can structure the household environment by removing hazards and valuables or by making certain areas of the house off limits by closing doors or installing gates, the safer this exploration can be. Reserve the "no-no's" for the real hazards, like hot stoves, that cannot be removed.

The key to discipline at this age is not punishment, but reward. Smile and praise your baby when he or she does something that you want to encourage. On the other hand, distraction with something more appealing or removal to another area can be used to manage behaviors you'd like to see less of (like chewing on the TV remote control). Be consistent. Temper tantrums commonly appear at this age. They come from the toddler trying to have some independence and control and losing both. Some parents find that ignoring the tantrum works best; others remove the child from the situation to a quiet place, like a crib or couch corner, for a short time. Lengthy discussions, yelling, spanking, or throwing a tantrum yourself is not helpful.

Feeding: Feeding a one-year-old is an exercise in patience. As much as possible, encourage self-feeding as you make the transition to table foods, although this can be messy. Your child may soon be attempting to use first a spoon, then a fork. This is a good time to introduce a cup, if you haven't already. After 15 months or so, children often get very attached to the bottle, and weaning becomes more difficult if you wait until then. Milk intake often drops after weaning, but that's okay as long as a couple servings of milk or other dairy products, such as cheese or yogurt are taken in a day. The rapid growth of the first year of life slows down dramatically in the second year, and you may see a definite decline in appetite, along

with more definite likes and dislikes around food. So long as a variety of healthy foods are offered, most toddlers will get a balanced diet, although servings may seem small. Beware of choking hazards such as nuts, popcorn, sliced hot dogs or carrots.

Safety: The toddler age through about 3 years of age is an especially hazardous time. Poisonings, choking, falls, and burns are the main causes of serious or fatal accidents at this age. Despite your best efforts, it is not possible to watch your child every minute, but you can make a careful check of the household environment to anticipate and prevent most accidents. Never underestimate a toddler's curiosity or overestimate his or her self-control. If you have not purchased Activated Charcoal, do it now! Kitchen and cleaning supplies should be out of reach and all medications should be locked up. Also check the garage (fertilizers and insecticides) and the basement (paint and cleaners). Burns are more common as mobility and dexterity increase. Turn your water heater temperature down to 120°, and keep hot drinks and pans well back from the table edge. Many children are fascinated by stairs and practice climbing up, although crawling down requires some coaching. Stair doors should be closed or gates installed to prevent independent practice sessions or unsupervised explorations.

Shoes: Shoes are primarily for protection of the feet and have little, if any, influence on the growth of the foot. Shoes hinder, rather than help, the learning-to-walk process, and should be worn routinely only after your child is walking well. Look for a shoe that has a soft, flexible sole with good traction and plenty of room for the toes. Unless we instruct you otherwise, simple sneakers fit the bill for most kids. Some toddlers with unusually wide feet will need professional fitting and name-brand sneakers. Many children normally walk on tiptoes as they learn to walk, and the feet may turn in or out during the toddler and preschool years. This is most often normal and does not require special shoes or appliances unless specifically recommended by the doctor or nurse practitioner.

Immunizations: Immunizations for polio, measles, mumps, and rubella (the MMR) and meningitis (the HiB) are given after the first birthday. The providers in the practice recommend immunization against varicella (chicken pox); it can also be given at this time. Reactions from the HiB are uncommon. Any reactions from the MMR, such as a fever or rash, tend to occur 7 to 10 days after the immunization. Premedication with acetaminophen (Tylenol, Tempra, etc.) is not necessary. The final immunization in the infant's series, a DPT booster, is given at the 15 or 18-month visit.