



## THE FIFTEEN MONTH OLD

### DEVELOPMENT

- Walks....Runs...Climbs
- Stacks blocks, puts large puzzle pieces in place
- Does not understand sharing or taking turns, which makes it difficult to play with other kids his or her age, prefers an older child or adult. May hit or even bite another child when he or she doesn't get his or her way until he or she learns to "use his or her words"
- Teach him or her names for feelings like mad, sad, and happy
- Eats independently with a spoon and maybe a fork
- Removes some clothing
- Says an increasing number of single words and understands your complete sentences
- Tends to be independent, wanting to do things for himself or herself, but is easily frustrated. They know more and want to do more than their physical and verbal skills allow. Their frustration will lessen as their verbal skills increase.

### EATING

At this stage, children are often more interested in playing than eating. They must sit down to eat to prevent choking. They usually eat table food cut into small pieces and in small portions. They may not want to eat a wide variety of food but what they eat should be nutritious. Feed your child foods from each food group (fruits, vegetables, grains, meats, and dairy). Do not introduce chips, soft drinks, or candy. Stay away from fast food restaurants and processed foods. These lead down the path to obesity.

Discontinue use of a bottle at this time. Your child should be drinking about 16 ounces of whole milk from a cup or eating a milk equivalent such as cheese or yogurt. As an option, you may continue to breastfeed 1-3 times a day during the second year with some additional whole milk.

### PLAY

Children love to be read books. They enjoy hearing their favorite books over and over. Ask questions like "where is the truck?" and "who is holding the ball?" Give your child cardboard or cloth books to look at by himself or herself. Your local library is a good source of children's books. Play music for your child so he or she can clap and dance to the rhythm. Fifteen month olds love active games like chase and kicking balls.

### Toys:

Start buying "open ended toys." This means a toy can be used in different ways depending on the child's imagination. Wooden blocks (large and small), duplos or other snap together toys, dolls, and doll furniture are a few suggestions. Children soon lose interest in "battery toys" that only have one function and require no imagination.

### SAFETY – POISON CONTROL 1-800-222-1222

Fifteen month olds are usually fully mobile and at a high rate of speed. They will run into the street, climb fences, and jump off porches. They have little fear and must be watched carefully. They will go through your purse, empty trash cans, and get into their siblings' rooms. Childproofing your house is no substitute for constant supervision.

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### **HEALTH CONCERNS**

**Teeth:** Brush his or her teeth before bedtime to remove the last bit of food or milk, including breastmilk. Cavities in this age group develop at night when less saliva is made. Use a tiny bit of toothpaste until your child learns to spit it out.

**Toilet Training:** Too young!!

### **Other Concerns:**

- In the summer, they may float around in warm swimming pools. It is too early for them to swim underwater.
- Better to use sunscreen and a little insect repellent with less than 10% DEET than have sunburn and multiple insect bites. Wash it all off before bedtime. A few bites are not harmful, but they itch for days and are so annoying.
- Ticks are common in Tennessee. To remove, grasp the tick with your fingers and gently pull until it lets go. Tick borne illness are rare but can happen 2-14 days after a tick bite, and symptoms include fever, headache, and occasionally a circular rash at the bite site.

**NEXT CHECK UP IS AT 18 MONTHS OLD.**