



THE TWO WEEK OLD

The first few weeks of your newborn's life are often difficult. First time parents especially are adjusting to the shock! Remember that at about six weeks, a routine begins to emerge. Until then, just try to rest during the day when possible and call upon friends and family for help.

Most babies have an acne type rash on their face between three to twelve weeks. This is normal due to hormonal changes and will resolve by three months. The circumcision should be completely healed, and the umbilical cord should be off soon. A tub bath may be given when the cord falls off.

DEVELOPMENT

Babies can lift their heads up when lying on their stomachs. Remember, babies can be on their stomachs when you are there and awake, but they need to sleep on their backs. An infant can see your face and may watch you for several seconds at a time. He or she may start spending more time awake, alert, and looking around.

FEEDING

Your infant still feeds every two to four hours day and night. He or she should be fed on demand. Your doctor may tell you not to wake him or her at night if his or her weight is good at the two week check up.

VITAMINS

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that breastfed infants receive vitamin D supplementation. You can buy D-Vi-Sol in the grocery store. Tri-Vi-Sol is an acceptable alternative. Your infant needs one dropper daily.

SLEEPING

Most infants are sleeping in a bassinet in their parents' room at night. You should not sleep with your infant for safety reasons. It is too early to expect your baby to sleep long stretches, but you can teach him or her the difference between day and night. Keep it dark and boring at night. Feed, change, and put your baby right back down. Many babies need to be walked and rocked to sleep. These practices should be stopped gradually, so that by four months, you can put your well-fed, happy baby in his or her crib awake, to fall asleep on his or her own.

SAFETY

Use your car seat!! Watch young siblings and pets closely when they are with your baby.

EXCESSIVE CRYING

Some babies cry more in the evening hours. This is classic colic. It is usually over by four months of age. Try using a front pack carrier or putting your infant in a stroller and taking a walk. Some babies like a swing or vibrating chair. It is okay to put an infant in his or her crib alone for ten minutes or so to see if he or she is overstimulated and tired. Sometimes babies cry no matter what you do! Just being there is enough.

NEXT CHECK UP IS AT ONE MONTH OLD.



THE TWO MONTH OLD

DEVELOPMENT

- Lifts head when on tummy
- Follows with eyes
- Responds with a smile and to noise

EATING

Breast milk or formula provides all the nutrition your baby needs for the first 4-6 months. We have found that babies have more problems with allergies if fed solids too soon. If formula fed, most babies are satisfied with 32 ounces per day. No bottle propping please. Always hold your baby during feeding.

PLAY

Remember, play is the baby's way of learning!

1. Talk to your baby.
2. Let your infant have brightly colored things to look at in the crib or playpen – mobiles, etc.
3. When awake, let the baby be with the rest of the family where the action is.
4. Take your baby for walks in a stroller or front pack carrier.

CONCERNS

Spitting Up: Many babies spit up a small amount of each feeding. As long as the baby is gaining weight and is not unusually fussy, this does no harm. Sitting the baby in an infant seat for 30 minutes after the feeding sometimes helps. Spitting up usually stops by itself by 9 months of age.

Not Sleeping Through The Night: Many babies will sleep through the night by 4 months of age or when they are 12-14 pounds. Stop feeding your baby to sleep by 3 months. They should be placed in bed content, well fed but awake. If necessary, let them "wiggle around and fuss a bit" to get themselves to sleep. They need to learn in their own minds how to get themselves to sleep so that in the future, when they wake in the middle of the night, they can get themselves back to sleep.

If your baby is over 3 months, let him or her cry a few minutes in the middle of the night before feeding him or her. He or she may not be hungry, but just trying to get back to sleep. As your baby nears 4 months, start feeding him or her less and less in the middle of the night to wean him or her from the nighttime calories.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Your infant will receive his or her first set of immunizations today. Low-grade fever, fussiness, or increased sleepiness is normal. You may give Tylenol several hours after the immunizations if needed. Our office is providing you with a Tylenol dosing sheet based on weight.

SAFETY

Babies are strong enough to tip a car seat to the side. Never leave an infant in a car seat on a high surface, such as a countertop, unattended.

THE NEXT CHECK UP IS AT FOUR MONTHS OLD.



THE FOUR MONTH OLD

DEVELOPMENT

- Rolls over
- Holds head steady when held upright
- Reaches for objects
- Squeals, coos
- Sleeps through the night

EATING

Infants become interested in solids between 4-6 months of age. **Breast milk or formula is still the infant's main food source.** However, you may now offer your infant rice cereal mixed with formula or breast milk. After an infant is accustomed to the cereal, you may gradually add Stage I fruits and vegetables to the cereal.

PLAY

Your baby is more alert and active now and can be self-entertained for short periods of time. Place your baby on his or her stomach on the floor. Put bright objects where your baby can see and grab them. Pick your toys carefully because it is normal for your baby to put everything in his or her mouth.

CONCERNS

Droling: Babies drool more frequently at this age. Their salivary glands are getting ready for new foods. This does not mean your baby is teething.

Teething: The average age for the first tooth is 7 months, but the age at which teeth appear can vary widely. Rubbing the gums with a cool washcloth and giving teething rings and Tylenol may help. We do not recommend Orajel.

Nighttime Awakening: After you feed and rock your infant at night, put him or her in the crib awake. At first, he or she may need to cry a little to get himself or herself to sleep. Once your baby learns how to make himself or herself fall asleep, he or she will be able to repeat this in the middle of the night without eating or rocking. Everybody, including your infant, will sleep better.

REMEMBER

It is important for parents to have a chance to get out, and babies need to have some time away from parents too. Don't be afraid to leave your baby with a reliable babysitter or family member occasionally.

NEXT CHECK UP IS AT SIX MONTHS OLD.



THE SIX MONTH OLD

DEVELOPMENT

- Rolls over and may creep on stomach (army crawl)
- Reaches for objects and holds them
- Sits leaning forward in a tripod position and usually falls over when he or she reaches for something
- Recognizes that someone is a stranger and may be afraid of them; cries when left alone in a room
- May begin to make consonant sounds like “da da da”, “ba ba ba”, “ma ma ma” (the start of babbling)

EATING

Eating is messy, because babies this age want to help you and touch the food. They do this by grabbing the spoon, squeezing the food through their fingers, and blowing bubbles with a mouth full of carrots. It helps for parents to keep their sense of humor. It may help to give your baby something to hold in each hand (spoon) while eating. Your baby should be taking iron-fortified cereal mixed with breast milk or formula from a spoon. Start introducing fruits, vegetables, and meats. Baby food may be purchased or made easily at home. For example, shred fresh carrots in a food processor, cook a few minutes in water until tender, and then puree in processor. Eat within a few days or freeze the puree in ice cube trays covered with plastic wrap. Pop the cubes out after they are frozen and store in zip lock bags. Most fruits and vegetables can be processed this way and the consistency can be made chunkier as your baby grows. Do not season or add sugar. Meats need to be processed with added thin baby rice cereal for better consistency. The frozen food cubes can be stored for more than a month and are easy to melt in a microwave. If your baby rejects the taste of a new food, try mixing it with a food he or she has accepted in the past. Avoid honey until one year. Never give your baby hard foods such as nuts or candy.

Your baby still needs breast milk or formula in addition to solids. If your infant bites down during breastfeeding, let him or her know that this is unacceptable with a firm “No bite!” Only use a bottle for formula or breastmilk. You can introduce a sippy cup at this time for a small amount of water. Do not let your baby have a bottle of formula or breastmilk in bed, because it can cause cavities if they continue this habit when teeth have erupted. **We do not recommend “feeding to fall asleep.”** Put your baby in the crib, well-fed but awake, and let him or her learn how to fall asleep. Now is a good time to transition your baby to his or her own room to sleep.

PLAY

Your baby might like for you to play peek-a-boo under a blanket or to carry him or her in a backpack while parents hike. When your baby can sit steady, he or she can transfer objects from hand to hand, from his or her hand to your hand, and from hand to mouth. Provide objects he or she can grasp and are also safe to chew.

SAFETY – POISON CONTROL 1-800-222-1222

- Time to start babyproofing the house. Electrical outlets should be covered. Put up all poisons, cleaning agents, and medicines. Keep all small objects out of reach. Gates for stairs, both top and bottom, are necessary before your baby begins to crawl.
- Do not leave your baby alone on a bed, in the yard, or in the tub. Do not leave your child in a carrier or car seat on a high surface. They are big enough to tip them over.
- Do not smoke or drink hot liquids while holding your baby. They are active, love to grab stuff, and may get burned.

NEXT CHECK UP IS AT 9 MONTHS OLD.



THE NINE MONTH OLD

DEVELOPMENT

- Sits alone and plays with objects while sitting
- Crawls or scoots and then pulls to standing
- Picks up small objects with thumb and forefinger, transfers objects from one hand to the other hand
- Looks for fallen objects or objects hidden under a blanket
- Babbles consonants like “ba ba” and shows understanding of what you say
- New fears include strangers (even grandparents), vacuum cleaners, big bathtub, animals, balloons, clowns

EATING

Most babies eat three meals a day, some of which can be soft table food or finger food. Your baby should breastfeed about 4-6 times a day or take about 24-32 ounces of formula. **We suggest using a cup for all new liquids introduced** (water or whole milk). Whole milk may be introduced slowly in a cup at about 11 months. Between 11-13 months, slowly give more whole milk in a cup and less formula/breastmilk in a bottle. This allows a slow transition to milk in a cup instead of formula/breastmilk in a bottle. Plan to end bottle feeding by 13 months. As whole milk is introduced in a cup, breastfeeding may be continued as long as desired. Discontinue feeding at night to protect new teeth.

Your baby should now be sitting in a high chair to eat, so he or she can join the family for meals. He or she will want to self-feed finger foods such as crackers, cheerios, and soft vegetables. **Let him or her make a mess!** Continue to feed your baby other foods with a spoon, but let him or her tell you when he or she has had enough food. Never overfeed just to clean the plate. Your baby may have likes and dislikes that should be respected so that you do not get into “food battles.”

PLAY

At this age, babies enjoy playing games like peek-a-boo and patty cake. They also like to practice finger control by picking up small objects. Introduce your baby to the feel of different textures. **Start reading to your child and showing him or her picture books.** Take your baby outside. Bare feet are best for learning to walk. Flexible sole shoes are good for walking outside or for warmth.

SAFETY – POISON CONTROL 1-800-222-1222

Accidents kill more children in the United States than all diseases put together. **Your house must be childproof now.**

- Lock up all medicines.
- Put all poisons/cleaning agents (including dishwasher and laundry detergent pods) out of reach.
- Cover all electrical plugs not in use with socket covers and keep electrical cords out of reach.
- Bolt furniture to the wall that your child may pull over on himself or herself (bookshelves, dressers, etc.).
- Keep tablecloths out of reach and turn pot handles to the back of the stove.
- Put gates on all stairs and keep plants out of reach.
- Keep all small objects out of reach.
- Always supervise your baby in the bathtub. Do not leave him or her alone for a second.
- Never drink hot liquids while holding your baby. Smoke outside the house (or better yet, quit)!

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SLEEP

Many babies who have been sleeping through the night may begin to wake up one or more times. This is due to their increasing ability to remember you when you are not with them. Sometimes they just need a few minutes alone to self-settle back to sleep. If this does not work, try a pat on the back or holding for a moment. We do not recommend feeding your baby to get him or her back to sleep; this will become a difficult habit to stop.

NEXT CHECKUP IS AT 12 MONTHS OLD.



THE TWELVE MONTH OLD

DEVELOPMENT

- Takes first steps, likes to climb and falls frequently, waves bye
- Uses a cup fairly well and starts using a spoon
- Has definite moods and can be negative for no reason
- Follows simple commands
- Receptive language is ahead of expressive language. They understand more than they can say.

EATING

There is usually a drop in appetite near age one. This is normal and not a reason for worry. Table food is denser than pureed food so less volume is needed for the same calories. Give only nutritious food due to the small amount that is usually eaten. Do not give candy, chips, soft drinks, and rarely give "dessert" foods. Five small meals work better than three large meals. This is not the time to push for good table manners.... independent eating is more important.

1. Let your baby feed himself or herself. When feeding him or her with a spoon, also give him or her a spoon to try to use. Put food on the spoon.
2. Use finger foods when possible and make servings small (soft cooked vegetable, beans, fruit, bread, noodles, cheese).
3. He or she must sit when eating to prevent choking. Cut round food like grapes or hot dogs in half.
4. Do not let your baby fill up on milk by sipping on a bottle or nursing all day. This is a good time to discontinue the use of the bottle or nurse only 2-3 times a day, hopefully not at night.
5. An easy way to transition off the bottle....put only formula or breastmilk in the bottle and only whole milk in a cup. As your baby takes more milk from the cup, he or she will transition off formula and the bottle at the same time. If he or she has teeth, always brush his or her teeth before bedtime. Milk, breastmilk, and juice on the teeth cause decay during sleep.

PLAY

At this age, babies are active and on the go all the time. They like to play in water (tub, sink, or the hose) but need supervision in all of these areas. Watch out.... they love to put things in the toilet bowl! They like soft, cuddly toys such as dolls and teddy bears. They like to help with work: dusting, washing dishes, picking up, and sweeping. Push-pull toys are fun (a wagon to put things in or push toys on a stick). They like to throw and roll balls. This age delights in being outside – finding small rocks to carry or throw, dirt, sand and mud, and "chasing pets." Take a slow walk in the woods with your child and watch what he or she can discover. Show him or her how some tree bark is "smooth" and some is "rough", some leaves are "round" and some are "pointy", rocks "splash" in the water, and frogs "jump". READ LOTS OF BOOKS.

SAFETY – POISON CONTROL 1-800-222-1222

Do not leave your child alone in the house, bathtub, or yard. A mobile one-year-old can get into danger very quickly in garages, near streets, around water, or other kids. Check your kitchen and bathrooms for knives, scissors, cleaners, and medicine that your child could reach. Your active, inquisitive but mildly uncoordinated one year old will have frequent bumps and falls; most are medically insignificant. If swelling develops, use a cold compress (if possible). Seek medical advice if your child is unconscious, has more than two episodes of vomiting (after a fall), is excessively sleepy, or has a change in coordination.

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DISCIPLINE

You need to set limits because your child cannot control himself yet. Remember, the word “discipline” means teaching, not “punishment”. Try removing your child from the scene or remove the object of concern instead of spanking. Verbally and with your actions, show him or her an alternative but similar activity that he or she would enjoy. Be careful not to say “no” all day long. Save it for the important times so he or she will listen when it counts. Instead of saying “no” to your child, give information to him or her in order to facilitate learning. For example, if your child is standing in a chair where he might fall, instead of yelling, “No, get down,” say, “chairs are for sitting, the floor is for standing.” At the same time, sit him in the chair or stand him on the floor to reinforce your words. Be consistent. The key to discipline is not punishment, but repeating the same information and reward. Smile and praise your child when he or she does something right. Hitting a child (spanking), just like hitting an adult is never acceptable. Temper tantrums come from your child trying to have some independence and control and losing both. Some parents find ignoring the tantrum works best. You may need to walk away from your child or place him or her in a room alone for a couple of minutes. Yelling, spanking, or throwing a tantrum yourself is not helpful. An occasional temper tantrum (for your child) is a sign of normal development and developing independent thinking.

NEXT CHECK UP IS AT 15 MONTHS OLD.



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.



THE EIGHTEEN MONTH OLD

DEVELOPMENT

- Walks...Runs...Climbs
- Able to throw a ball but rarely catches one
- Independently feeds himself or herself and lets you know when he or she has had enough. Never force more food than your child wants.
- Scribbles with a crayon (everywhere – watch out)
- Turns pages in a book
- Points to body parts when asked
- Single words are increasing. Your child can understand your complete sentences. Indicates wants now by pointing or single words. Give him or her choices when possible - do you want the blue or red cup?
- Imitates older kids or parents (cleaning, dancing, dress-up)

EATING

Your child should be eating a well-balanced diet of table food cut into small pieces. They often need nutritious snacks between meals (cheese, fruit, crackers with peanut butter or hummus). Continue to avoid soda, gum, chips, and fast food. Avoid hard foods like peanuts, popcorn or hard candy. They must SIT to EAT. Choking on food while walking is a hazard at this age.

PLAY

- Music for learning language and for dancing to improve coordination
- Books, books and more books
- Wooden blocks – large maple blocks come in many shapes for building on the floor
- Large cardboard boxes to draw on and then play in
- Riding toys that they push with their feet
- Outdoor playgrounds with swings and small slides
- Dress up clothes
- Stay away from battery toys whenever possible
- Minimal to no TV.

SAFETY – POISON CONTROL 1-800-222-1222

This is the peak time for poisoning. Also, watch out for family pets since children at this age are not gentle. An eighteen month old has little awareness of danger. Watch them closely around cars, bicycles, staircases, and older active children. Do not let them run with objects such as pencils, forks, or sticks. Some learn how to climb out of their crib. If they can climb out, time to put them in a regular bed or just a mattress on the floor.

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BEHAVIOR

Eighteen month olds are developing a sense of self and independence that you will want to foster. Work on giving them choices to minimize their frustration – do you want to wear the blue shirt or the red shirt? Show them respect by letting them know the plan (we are going to put on your shoes and then go to the park; we are going to play with these blocks and then take a bath). If they throw a tantrum (and they will sometimes), at least you have shown them respect by telling them the plan. It is easier to explain the plan before the tantrum. Then, you can ignore the tantrum. If a child is treated with respect at an early age, they will grow up with a good sense of self and show others (including parents) respect.

When a child this age loses control (yells, hits, runs away from you), these parent options are appropriate - ignore, restrain, time out, pick up your child and leave the situation, and talk in a firm, quiet voice. It is never ok to hit a child. Hitting a child teaches them that you have lost control of the situation, and your child needs to trust that you will always take care of him in any situation.

A bedtime routine of brushing teeth and reading books or telling stories is important. They will know that the next step is being put in their bed to fall asleep. Some toddlers awaken frequently at night. Reassurance is usually all that is needed. Some children need for a parent to sit next to their bed to fall back asleep. Avoid feeding anything but water in the middle of the night. If you bring them to your bed, they will get used to it and expect to be there every night – it is your choice.

Toilet Training: It is best to wait until 2-2.5 years, but introduce words for urine and bowel movement at this age.

NEXT CHECK UP IS AT TWO YEARS OLD.



THE TWO YEAR OLD

DEVELOPMENT

- Kicks a ball and can throw it overhand
- Walks up stairs and backwards
- Stacks 2-3 blocks
- Removes some clothing
- Independently feeds himself or herself
- Combines 2-3 words and names objects
- Tells first name

EATING

Your child may eat any food he or she wants except small, hard foods that could cause choking. Remember, most children will rarely choke when sitting in a high chair, only when eating and moving at the same time (walking or running). A serving size for most children this age is only 2-3 tablespoons. Many children prefer the same foods every day. This is fine, as long as the foods are healthy and include milk products, grains (cereal, oatmeal, bread), protein (meat, beans, nut butters), fruits, and vegetables.

PLAY

- Picture books and simple stories, poetry, and rhymes — remember your public library has children's books
- Crayons and lots of paper; puzzles and wooden blocks
- Parks and playgrounds — climbing and swinging provide wonderful entertainment
 - Two year olds love short hikes!

BEHAVIOR

Encourage developing independence and give choices whenever possible. More choices leads to less frustration and anger. Communication is still limited, so expect some frustration and temper tantrums. Sit down, talk, and listen to your child face to face at their eye level. A recommended book for parents: 1-2-3 Magic: 3-Step Discipline for Calm, Effective and Happy Parenting. Security objects are still very important (blankets, dolls, teddy bears, thumbs). Do not be surprised if your child wants to carry his or her blanket everywhere. These security objects will help comfort your child through real and imaginary fears, bumps, and scrapes.... and bedtime.

SLEEP

Children can change from the crib to a bed this year. A bedtime routine is important (bath, brush teeth, story). Routines add security and help your child accept bedtime limits. Nightmares are common and a few minutes of parental comforting usually works.

SAFETY – POISON CONTROL 1-800-222-1222

A two-year old's increasing physical abilities of running and climbing along with their wonderful curiosity can place them in dangerous situations. Close supervision is the best prevention. Never leave a child alone near water or in the back yard. At this age, you can turn your child front-facing. He or she should remain in this car seat until he or she reaches the weight limit.

NEXT CHECK UP IS AT THREE YEARS OLD.

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TOILET TRAINING

WHEN TO TOILET TRAIN

Before your child can be successfully toilet trained, there are certain physical things he or she must be able to do and certain ideas he or she must understand. Children are able to do these things at different ages but the typical age range is 2-3 years old. Do not try to introduce toilet training at the same time other major changes are happening in your household, such as a new baby, moving, or a parent going back to work.

PHYSICAL SKILLS REQUIRED

- Be able to walk well
- Be able to sit down and get up alone
- Can pull clothing up and down
- Can control sphincter muscles — is able to stay dry for several hours

IDEAS UNDERSTOOD

- Can understand simple questions and directions
- Can let you know he or she has soiled his or her pants
- Has trust in his or her mother/father and wants to please
- Has a sense of independence and wants to try to do things for himself or herself
- Feels proud of being able to do a task

SUGGESTIONS

- Put a potty chair in the bathroom and introduce it as your child's own. Let him or her sit on it with his or her clothes on. Sit with your child awhile and read a book, etc. Make the association for your child between the regular toilet and his or her potty chair.
- It may be helpful to obtain a book at your library or bookstore about a small child using a potty. Read the book often so your child will identify with the child in the story.
- After he or she has become familiar with the potty chair, ask him or her to sit on it without his or her diaper at the time a regular bowel movement is expected (often after meals). Do not expect him or her to sit more than 5-10 minutes.
- If the previous step is accepted, you may increase to 2-3 times a day. If successful, introduce underwear that your child can manage to get up and down alone.
- Ask your child every hour to urinate in the potty, gradually lengthening the time as your child gains more control. After a few months, your child should go to the potty without being asked.
- This should not become a battleground between you and your child. **If the above does not work, forget it for a few weeks and try again. Most parents try to potty train too early. I think the best age is 2 years 4 months** for the average child. If you do no training, most children will potty train themselves at age 3-3.5 years through imitation.
- If your child begins "stool holding behavior" (creating large, hard stool with painful defecation), put him or her back in diapers and tell your child that it is his or her choice to poop when he or she wants to poop.



THE THREE YEAR OLD

DEVELOPMENT

Encouraging your child's independence is helpful for his or her development!

- Throws a ball overhand, jumps in place, pedals a tricycle, and alternates feet ascending stairs
- Builds a tower of blocks and draws a circle and a cross
- Knows full name, age, and sex; asks what, where, and why questions
- Speaks in sentences and 75% of words can be understood
- Plays chase and make believe; learns to share and take turns

DIET

Limit junk foods such as sodas, juices, chips, and candy! These types of foods are unhealthy and lead to obesity and cavities. It is best not to have these foods in the house because we cannot expect a child to have self-control if they know they are available. Your child will beg constantly for these foods if they are around. Your child will eat healthy foods and drink milk and water if alternatives do not exist. It is much easier to say, "We do not have any. Would you like some yogurt or a banana?" Brush teeth twice daily. This is a good time for the first visit to the dentist.

PLAY

Allow your child to explore, show initiative, and communicate his or her desires. Offer your child choices in appropriate situations. If your child suggests an idea or activity, follow through if possible. A child will learn to respect and love himself if he or she feels like his or her ideas are important to you. Limit TV. A child needs to learn how to play and use his or her imagination. Watching TV and playing video games promote poor attention spans. Children need to learn to play with toys, look at books, and interact with people. Even educational electronic devices are not good compared to discovering the world through real life experience!

Outside Activities:

Go to the playground. Throw, catch, and kick balls. Ride tricycles (with a helmet!) and big wheels. Take a hike. Radnor Lake, Edwin Warner Nature Center, and Montgomery Bell State Park are nearby.

Inside Activities:

Do puzzles, build with blocks, and string beads. Read books and go to story time at the library. Pretend play with clothes, household objects, and toys. Use crayons, markers, and paint.

DISCIPLINE

- Give clear instructions. Explain the consequences of an unacceptable behavior (for example, removal of a toy). Give one warning and then follow through.
- Try to redirect in a positive way. For example, "Food is for eating, not throwing. Let's throw a ball outside after dinner." Or, "Let's not play with that. Here is a pot to play with. Let's pretend it's a drum!"
- Use "when" and "then." "When you get your shoes on, then you can go outside!" Get what you want first and then reward that behavior.
- Catch your child doing things you like and praise those behaviors! Children want to please you.

NEXT CHECK UP IS AT FOUR YEARS OLD.