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## 15 MONTH VISIT

15 months are lots of fun. Their personality is on full display, and growing by the minute. Their mobility will surprise you, and they will disappear in the blink of an eye. If you've wondered (judged?) why some parents use leashes, you'll soon understand!

### Development

1. Your toddler may only say 4-5 words but almost certainly understands a lot of what you are saying and may even follow some simple commands ("Go get the book.") She is climbing all over the place and walking with greater ease, even running.
2. At this age, toddlers love routines, jobs and being a helper, stacking and emptying and doing it over and over again. This repetition is called a "play loop," and we all know what happens when you interrupt a toddler deep in play. Respect "the loop" and give warnings when play is soon to come to an end.
3. "Screen time" is becoming a serious health concern in this country. Its link to obesity is clear. Its effect on the developing brain is unknown. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no television for children under the age of 2. I feel that a 30-minute show is not unreasonable from time to time, but this should not become an increasingly routine part of your day. The TV should not become a babysitter! Use TV and screens as a family activity instead!
4. If sleep continues to be an issue, it is very difficult to avoid sleep training without some amount of "crying it out" by this age. Your toddler will not feel abandoned or emotionally scarred by this process. You certainly may, but remember, establishing healthy sleep is just as important as loving and nourishing your busy toddler.
5. Read the water safety handout, which is so important as we are surrounded by water here in Chattanooga!

### Injury Prevention

1. Use a rear-facing car seat to restrain your child in automobiles. It should be rear-facing until your child is 2.
2. Choking hazards and water safety continue to be the most important risks to your toddler. Be ever vigilant.
3. Take the following steps to prevent burns and scalds:
  - Set hot water thermostats at 120 degrees F or less
  - Keep hot liquids out of reach. Your toddler will reach up and pull your coffee down
  - Do not carry your child while handling hot liquids
  - Beware of hot substances on table cloths that your child will pull down
  - Cook on the back burners of your cooktop
  - Beware of hot slides in the summer time!
4. Children should not ride on motorized vehicles with you; this includes ATV's, lawn mowers, and tractors. Children should remain indoors while you are mowing the lawn.

### Nutrition

1. Don't let your great eater become picky. Toddlers become picky because we let them. Continue to offer healthy foods throughout the day. That is your job. It's his job to eat it. He's growing great as you have seen on all his health checks, so don't worry. He will eat when he's hungry.
2. Continue to offer age-appropriate foods that are not choking hazards.
3. Many toddlers will drink their hunger away and not eat their meal. Don't let her pull this trick on you. As long as her stool stays soft, she is well hydrated and drinking enough. Don't let her fill her hungry belly with an 8-oz sippy cup of milk at dinnertime.

### Next Visit

The next visit is at 18 months. Only one more vaccine!! Woohoo!!

By this visit, your toddler will be running and climbing like crazy, love independence, and understand everything you say to them but certainly won't always listen. Have fun and shower your child with affection!

# It Only Takes a Moment



**Anyone watching children who are in, on or around water must understand that drowning happens quickly and suddenly. Any source of water is a potential drowning hazard, especially for young children and weak swimmers.**

## Understand the risks.

- Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death for children ages 1 to 14 years.
- Drowning usually happens quickly and silently—many children who drown in home pools were out of sight for less than 5 minutes and in the care of one or both parents at the time.\*
- The place where drowning is likely to occur changes with age:
  - Children under 1 year most often drown in bath tubs, buckets or toilets.
  - Children ages 1 to 4 years most often drown in home pools.
  - Older children most often drown in natural water settings.\*
- Know the water hazards in your community and make sure children stay away. These hazards could include—
  - Drainage ditches.
  - Garden ponds.
  - Creeks and streams.
  - Wells and cisterns.
  - Canals.

## Maintain constant supervision.

- Maintain constant supervision of children whenever around water.
- Avoid distractions when supervising children around water.
- Have children or inexperienced swimmers wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket around water, but do not rely on life jackets alone—always maintain constant supervision!
- Block access to unguarded, non-designated swimming areas.
- Alcohol and water do not mix. Alcohol impairs judgment, balance and coordination; affects swimming and diving skills; and reduces the body's ability to stay warm.

## Know how to respond to an aquatic emergency.

- If a child is missing, check the water first. Seconds count in preventing death or disability.
- Know how and when to call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number.
- Enroll in Red Cross water safety, first aid and CPR courses to learn what to do. Insist that babysitters, grandparents and others who care for children know these lifesaving skills.

*\*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

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**For more information or to enroll in Swimming and Water Safety courses, contact your local Red Cross chapter.**



**American  
Red Cross**