

Child's Well Visit, 12 Months: Care Instructions



Your Care Instructions

Your baby may start showing their own personality at 12 months. Your baby may show interest in the world around them.

At this age, your baby may be ready to walk while holding on to furniture. Pat-a-cake and peekaboo are common games your baby may enjoy. Your baby may point with fingers and look for hidden objects. And your baby may say 1 to 3 words and eat without your help.

Follow-up care is a key part of your child's treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if your child is having problems. It's also a good idea to know your child's test results and keep a list of the medicines your child takes.

How can you care for your child at home?

Feeding

- Keep breastfeeding as long as it works for you and your baby.
- Give your child whole cow's milk or full-fat soy milk. Your child can drink nonfat or low-fat milk at age 2. If your child age 1 to 2 years has a family history of heart disease or obesity, reduced-fat (2%) soy or cow's milk may be okay. Ask your doctor what is best for your child.
- Cut or grind your child's food into small pieces.
- Let your child decide how much to eat.
- Encourage your child to drink from a cup. Water and milk are best. Juice does not have the valuable fiber that whole fruit has. If you must give your child juice, limit it to 4 to 6 ounces a day.

- Offer many types of healthy foods each day. These include fruits, well-cooked vegetables, whole-grain cereal, yogurt, cheese, whole-grain breads and crackers, lean meat, fish, and tofu.

Safety

- Watch your child at all times when near water. Be careful around pools, hot tubs, buckets, bathtubs, toilets, and lakes. Swimming pools should be fenced on all sides and have a self-latching gate.
- For every ride in a car, secure your child into a properly installed car seat that meets all current safety standards. For questions about car seats, call the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at 1-888-327-4236.
- To prevent choking, do not let your child eat while walking around. Make sure your child sits down to eat. Do not let your child play with toys that have buttons, marbles, coins, balloons, or small parts that can be removed. Do not give your child foods that may cause choking. These include nuts, whole grapes, hard or sticky candy, hot dogs, and popcorn.
- Keep drapery cords and electrical cords out of your child's reach.
- If your child can't breathe or cry, they are probably choking. Call right away. Then follow the operator's instructions.
- Do not use walkers. They can easily tip over and lead to serious injury.
- Use sliding gates at both ends of stairs. Do not use accordion-style gates, because a child's head could get caught. Look for a gate with openings no bigger than 2 3/8 inches.
- Keep the Poison Control number (1-800-222-1222) in or near your phone.
- Help your child brush their teeth every day. For children this age, use a tiny amount of toothpaste with fluoride (the size of a grain of rice).

Immunizations

- By now, your baby should have started a series of immunizations for illnesses such as whooping cough and diphtheria. It may be time to get other vaccines, such as chickenpox. Make sure that your baby gets all the recommended childhood vaccines. This will help keep your baby healthy and prevent the spread of disease.

When should you call for help?

Watch closely for changes in your child's health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You are concerned that your child is not growing or developing normally.
- You are worried about your child's behavior.
- You need more information about how to care for your child, or you have questions or concerns.

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