

Suzanne Holbrook, MD
sunnysidepeds.com

15 Month Well Child Visit

Developmental skills for your 15-month old include walking holding a toy, climbing on furniture, stooping to pick up an object, building a tower with 3 blocks, places a circle in a single shaped puzzle, shows empathy for sad feelings, hugs in reciprocation, identifies one body part, follows single step commands, uses 3 to 5 words. Changes in behavior such as temper tantrums and acting out start about now. Distraction is a good first measure and usually works.

Your child, if like most at this age, will become fussier and more restrictive with food. Continue to offer all types of food. Continue to give whole milk, 3 meals and 2-3 snacks daily. Try to incorporate fresh foods rather than processed or frozen. Common pitfall at 15 months is to either allow the child to pick what they eat by only offering what you know they will eat or to give juice or milk to drink continually throughout the day. Both only offering limited types of foods and too many liquid calories will hamper appetite and/or hamper food exploration. Please choose for your child all different types of food, not only what you know they will eat. By offering varying foods you will encourage liking many food types. Please sit down with them for mealtimes; this will also encourage eating well. I have found that a multivitamin may aid in appetite. This can be ordered through a link on the "Meet us" then my page on the sunnysidepeds.com website. Juice is not necessary and limit milk to 20 oz daily. I do have handouts for amounts and types of foods required daily for adequate nutrition if you have any questions please ask for one of these.

Sleep at this age hopefully will be established. If your child is still fighting bedtime it isn't too late to teach this skill. Bedtime routines such as snack, bath, book or other quiet activity and music are calming. Calmly and firmly let your child know your expectations and with consistency the child will sleep. Bedtime routine in the bedroom when possible will help. Remove all distracting toys or activities from view may help in quieting down. I have been known to help a frightened child fall asleep by staying in the room, perhaps by the door, allowing the child to see you while falling asleep. Over time you can wean the child off needing this comfort. Remember transitional objects and nightlights might help. Watch for sleep disturbances like dreams or night terrors, large tonsils or adenoids. If your child is snoring loudly and is causing troubled sleep or waking 2- 3 times weekly with sleep disturbances of any kind, let me know.

At this age, there are many dangers that your child can get into, as you fully know. Have the Poison Control Number on hand, childproof gates and constant watching are necessary. Rear-facing car seats are recommended. I recommend a helmet if riding in a bike trailer or other fast-moving vehicle. Brush teeth 2 times daily and make sure fluoride is in your drinking water. Reverse-osmosis filtration systems for water will remove the fluoride. Let me know if you need a fluoride supplement.

Limit any T.V. to educational videos. T.V. is not recommended until 2 years of age and then very limited times. T.V. has been identified to cause aggression and sleep disturbances as a minimum.

Constipation is common due to toddler food choices. Look for fiber rich foods- - whole grains, oatmeal, dried or fresh fruits and vegetables. Make sure your child is drinking at least 8 oz of water daily. If the stools are soft even though not daily, don't worry about constipation. If the stools are hard, Miralax, over the counter, 1 tsp daily is helpful. Let me know if this isn't helping.

There are recommended vaccines today. As always, Tylenol and Ibuprofen can be given for discomfort.

The next well visit is at 18 months of age.

Have fun and call with questions or concerns.

Suzy Holbrook, MD