



EIGHTEEN MONTH VISIT Anticipatory Guidance

Safety

- **Car Seat Safety.** Make sure your child's car seat is rear facing until he reaches the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer. In most cases, this will be past the second birthday. Read more about car seat safety at [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org) and the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov).
- **Home Safety.**
 - Keep medicines, cleaning supplies, and chemicals in locked cabinets, out of your child's sight and reach.
 - Call **Poison Control** if you are worried your child has ingested something harmful. The number is **1-800-222-1222**.
 - If you have a gun in your home, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition stored separately.
- **Sun safety.** When you go outside, put a hat on your child, have him wear sun protection clothing, and apply sunscreen. Limit time outside when the sun is strongest (11am-3pm).

Health

- **Dental Health**
 - Clean your toddler's teeth with a toothbrush and a small smear of fluoride toothpaste (no more than a grain of rice) twice a day.
 - Avoid juice and sugar sweetened beverages.
- **Healthy Eating**
 - Offer a variety of healthy foods and snacks, especially vegetables, fruits, and lean protein.
 - Let your child decide what and how much to eat. Picky eating is common at this age.
 - Limit milk to around 16 ounces per day.
 - Give your toddler many chances to try a new food.
- **For after-hours emergencies, you can reach the provider on call at 252-499-6012.**

Development

- Read and sing to your child often.
- Talk about and describe pictures in books.
- Use simple words with your child.
- Suggest words that describe emotions to help your child learn the language of feelings.
- Ask your child simple questions, offer praise for answers, and explain simply.
- Use simple, clear words to tell your child what you want him to do.

Behavior

- Expect your child to cling to you in new situations or to be anxious around strangers.
- Play with your child each day doing things he likes.
- Be consistent in discipline and setting limits for your child.
- Plan ahead for difficult situations and try things that can make them easier.

- Wait until your child is ready for toilet training (average age is 2.5). Signs of being ready include:
 - Staying dry for 2 hours
 - Knowing if he is wet or dry
 - Can pull pants up and down
 - Wanting to learn
 - Can tell you if he is having a bowel movement
- Read books about toilet training with your child
- Praise sitting on the potty or toilet
- If you are expecting a baby you can read books about being a big brother or sister.

Sleep Habits

- Put your child to bed at the same time every night. Early is better.
- Make the hour before bedtime loving and calm.
- Have a simple bedtime routine that includes a book.
- Try to put your child down when he is drowsy but still awake.
- Don't give your child a bottle in bed.
- Don't put a TV or any electronics in your child's room.
- Avoid giving your child too much attention if he wakes during the night. Use words to reassure and give a blanket or toy to hold for comfort.

Next Well Check: 2 years (24 months) of age

This is general guidance. Please speak with us directly about specific concerns for your child. Well checks are an important time to review growth, development, and what to expect over the next few months with your toddler.