eClinicalWorks

Well-Child Checkup: 3 Years

**Teach your child to be cautious around cars.
Children should always hold an adult's hand when
crossing the street.**

Even if your child is healthy, keep bringing him or her in for yearly checkups. This helps to make sure that your child's health is protected with scheduled vaccines. Your child's healthcare provider can make sure your child's growth and development is progressing well. This sheet describes some of what you can expect.

Development and milestones

The healthcare provider will ask questions and observe your child's behavior to get an idea of his or her development. By this visit, your child is likely doing some of the following:

- Showing many emotions, like affection and concern for a friend

- Separating easily from parents
- Using 2 to 3 sentences at a time
- Saying "I", "me", "we", "you"
- Playing make-believe with dolls or toys
- Stacking more than 6 blocks or other objects
- Running and climbing well
- Pedaling a tricycle

Feeding tips

Don't worry if your child is picky about food. This is normal. How much your child eats at one meal or in one day is less important than the pattern over a few days or weeks. Don't force your child to eat. To help your 3-year-old eat well and develop healthy habits:

- Give your child a variety of healthy food choices at each meal. Don't give up on offering new foods. It often takes several tries before a child starts to like a new taste.
- Set limits on what foods your child can eat. And give your child appropriate portion sizes. At this age, children can begin to get in the habit of eating when they're not hungry. Or they may choose unhealthy snack foods and sweets over healthier choices.
- Your child should drink low-fat or nonfat milk or 2 daily servings of other calcium-rich dairy products, such as yogurt or cheese. Besides milk, water is best. Limit fruit juice. Any juiceld be 100% juice. You may want to add water to the juice. Don't give your child soda.
- Don't let your child walk around with food. This is a choking risk. It can also lead to overeating as the child gets older.

Hygiene tips

- Bathe your child daily, and more often if needed.
- If your child isn't yet potty trained, he or she will likely be ready in the next few months. Ask the healthcare provider how to move forward. See below for tips.

- Help your child brush his or her teeth twice a day. Use a pea-sized drop of fluoride toothpaste and a toothbrush designed for children. Teach your child to spit out the toothpaste after brushing instead of swallowing it.
- Take your child to the dentist at least twice a year for teeth cleaning and a checkup.

Sleeping tips

Your child may still take 1 nap a day or may have stopped napping. He or she should sleep around 8 to 10 hours at night. If he or she sleeps more or less than this but seems healthy, it's not a concern. To help your child sleep:

- Follow a bedtime routine each night, such as brushing teeth followed by reading a book. Try to stick to the same bedtime each night.
- If you have any concerns about your child's sleep habits, let the healthcare provider know.

Safety tips

- Don't let your child play outdoors without supervision. Teach caution around cars. Your child should always hold an adult's hand when crossing the street or in a parking lot.
- Protect your child from falls. Use sturdy screens on windows. Put gates at the tops of staircases. Supervise the child on the stairs.
- If you have a swimming pool, check that it is fenced on all sides. Close and lock gates or doors leading to the pool.
- Plan ahead. At this age, children are very curious. They are likely to get into items that can be dangerous. Keep latches on cabinets. Keep products like cleansers and medicines out of reach.
- Watch out for items that are small enough for the child to choke on. As a rule, an item small enough to fit inside a toilet paper tube can cause a child to choke.
- Teach your child to be gentle and cautious with dogs, cats, and other animals. Always supervise the child around animals, even familiar family pets.
- In the car, always put your child in a car seat in the back seat. All children younger than 13 should ride in the back seat. Babies and toddlers should ride

in a rear-facing car safety seat for as long as possible. That means until they reach the top weight or height allowed by their seat. Check your safety seat instructions. Most convertible safety seats have height and weight limits that will allow children to ride rear-facing for 2 years or more.

- Keep this Poison Control phone number in an easy-to-see place, such as on the refrigerator: 800-222-1222.

Vaccines

Based on recommendations from the CDC, at this visit your child may gett the following vaccine:

- Influenza (flu)

Potty training

For many children, potty training happens around age 3. If your child is telling you about dirty diapers and asking to be changed, this is a sign that he or she is getting ready. Here are some tips:

- Don't force your child to use the toilet. This can make training harder.
- Explain the process of using the toilet to your child. Let your child watch other family members use the bathroom, so the child learns how it's done.
- Keep a potty chair in the bathroom, next to the toilet. Encourage your child to get used to it by sitting on it fully clothed or wearing only a diaper. As the child gets more comfortable, have him or her try sitting on the potty without a diaper.
- Praise your child for using the potty. Use a reward system, such as a chart with stickers, to help get your child excited about using the potty.
- Understand that accidents will happen. When your child has an accident, don't make a big deal out of it. Never punish the child for having an accident.
- If you have concerns or need more tips, talk with the healthcare provider.