

# Allentown

## Pediatric + Adolescent Medicine



### Caring for Your Growing Child

#### 12-24 Months

Your child has now entered toddler hood! The theme that emerges during this stage of your child's life (and for the next few years) is independence. Fortunately, the striving for independence is a gradual process, allowing you to adjust to new needs and demands.

#### Growth and Development

During these twelve months, your child will start walking independently. At first your child will walk with feet that strike apart, toes pointing outward, and sway from side to side. Expect lots of falls. This initial "waddling" will eventually give way to a much more mature walk, with feet close together, toes at his sides. As your child masters walking, she will be able to pull toys behind her, carry a toy in each hand, and throw a ball while walking. By the second birthday, many children are starting to run. Your child will also be able to kick a ball, climb over and down from furniture, walk up and down stairs with assistance.

As your child is mastering these gross motor skills of walking, climbing, and running, he is also making rapid progress with fine motor skills - hand-eye coordination, handling small objects and appreciating their size and shape. Your child will enjoy putting objects in a container and then dumping them out, stacking blocks and knocking them down, playing with balls, putting round paper into holes, turning pages of a book or magazine, and scribbling and painting.

Perhaps even more remarkable than the physical advances during this period, is the development in your child's abilities to understand and speak: receptive and expressive language skills. Your child will soon learn to understand almost everything you say. At first, he will be able to follow simple directions with pointing, then eventually commands using words only. By the second birthday, your child will be able to point to named objects and recognize names of familiar people, objects, and body parts.

At one year of age, your child may have one of two words in her vocabulary aside the babbling and gurgling. Over the next several months, the vocabulary will expand - to about 50 or more words at eighteen months, and 50 or more words by the second birthday. By the end of this period many children are speaking in two word phrases or sentences, and repeating words heard in conversation.

This explosion in language development is truly amazing. You can help your child achieve these milestones by speaking clearly and slowly to your child, or begin using baby talk, and teaching your

child the correct word for objects and body parts. Reading to your child is also an essential part of language development.

### **Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Development**

Your child is processing everything he or she hears and sees. She is a master mimic or imitator. He copies everything he hears and imitates your actions around the house. He will use his toy telephone to carry on conversations, "read" to you from his book, or brush the doll's hair. While behavior and pretend will not be enough during play.

Your child will become an expert at hide and seek. She will remember where a toy was left. She may understand that when you leave, you will come back.

A toddler is self-centered and impulsive. He or she has little awareness of the feelings of others. Everything is "mine." Sharing is not in a toddler's realm of understanding. Toddlers enjoy the company of other children, but their play with other children is called parallel. They will play alongside other children, but will not cooperate, take turns, or share. Therefore to say, toddlers do play with other children expect constant adult guidance and intervention.

Your toddler has mastered so much during such a short period of time, but he will lack judgment and doesn't appreciate consequences of his actions. Your child is eager to do things independently and test new skills, but still dependent emotionally and easily frustrated. His mood will change from moment to moment or day to day – demanding independence or feeling insecure and clingy. Your challenge will be to encourage his new striving for independence while providing a safety net of maximum, but consistent limits, and modeling the up and down with calmness, love and patience.

### **Behavior and Discipline**

Your child's job is to explore and learn. She is curious, wants to check everything out, practice new skills over and over, and imitate what she sees and hears. She strives to do everything independently! You need to understand her journey is short. She does not remember "no". She does not understand right from wrong and the consequences of her actions. Your child lacks self-control. **Your child is not "bad"; your child is a toddler.**

Your job as a parent is to encourage your child's curiosity by providing a safe environment for exploration. Remove the breakables, the coffee table with the sharp corners, the cabinet/lock waiting to be yanked down. Child proofing is a form of discipline and eliminates the need for the constant "no's". It is your job to ensure your child from danger or redirect his activities when heading towards danger. This requires constant supervision, patience, and self-control.

It is the parents' job to support your child's desire and striving for independence. To do this, you need to have realistic expectations based on normal toddler behavior and development, and that are appropriate limits. These limits established must be clearly and consistently maintained – this is the cornerstone of disciplining a toddler successfully.

Remember to model good manners, behavior, and speech. Treat your child with respect and give lots and lots of positive attention (attention). Lavish your child with praise, hugs, and kisses for new accomplishments and the good behavior you are trying to teach. Respond promptly to your child's needs and requests. Appreciate your child and have fun!

## **Tantrum Tantrums**

Tantrum outbursts begin after the first birthday and can occur throughout early childhood. They are a child's way of expressing anger and frustration. Some tantrums can be avoided by setting clear and consistent limits, having appropriate expectations for your child's behavior, having lots of Time-in. Redirecting or distracting a child heading towards frustration and helping with transitions can also prevent tantrums. But tantrums will occur, despite our best efforts. When a tantrum tantrum occurs it is important to ignore your child, do not give in to the demands, stay calm, and do not take the negative behavior personally.

## **Feeding and Nutrition**

It is important to realize that your child is no longer growing as rapidly as during the first year of life, and families may eat less. Much of what we talked about with regards to toddler behavior and development is reflected in his eating habits. Toddlers don't like new foods; they are picky - their likes vary from day to day, or even the amount they eat. Toddlers are opinionated - they know what they want and don't want, and want to eat independently.

### **Parent's job:**

- Provide nutritious meals and snacks - three meals with two planned snacks in between
- Offer food from four food groups
  1. Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, beans
  2. Milk, cheese, yogurt
  3. Fruits and vegetables
  4. Cereal/grains, potatoes, rice, bread, pasta
- Provide food that your child can handle and will not choke on - soft, moist foods
- Do not make your child clean his or her plate
- Make meal time pleasant, eat as a family, turn off the TV

### **Toddler's job:**

- Decides what, how much, and whether to eat
- Eats independently - prepares for the meal

After the first birthday, your child can transition to whole milk. Toddlers need some fat in their diet for proper growth and development. Whole milk dairy products and small amounts of whole fat are fine to eat when preparing your child's food.

Limit the amount of milk to 24-32 oz per day. Don't give beverages (soft drinks, flavored milk or milk) except water. Avoid excess juice drinks - this is a common cause of excessive weight gain, diarrhea or solid stools, and cavities. This is the time to encourage the use of a cup and wean your child from the bottle. Eliminate milk or juice night feedings as this also causes tooth decay!

Limit the amount of cream your child eats - cream foods give concentrated energy, but lack the other needed nutrients and protein milk does.

Vitamin supplements are not necessary for the healthy child who is eating a variety of nutritious foods every day.

Many mothers and children continue to enjoy breastfeeding during the second year. It is a personal decision to breast or not breast from the breast during these months.

For more on feeding your toddler please refer to the handbook.

## Sleep

A common bedtime routine is a must. Establish a routine and stick to it. Active dreaming starts between twelve to fourteen months of age. This may cause your child to wake up startled or frightened. Avoid putting him up or taking him out of bed. Hopefully your efforts to ensure good sleep habits have paid off, allowing you to regain your rest and strength before the next day with your energetic child.

## Toilet Training

Most children will not have the bladder and bowel control necessary to start toilet training before two years of age. In addition, most children will not have the motor skills needed to take off their clothes before using the toilet or have the ability to communicate the need to urinate or have a bowel movement. Because of these requirements, it is usually recommended waiting until after the second birthday or until your child is showing signs of readiness. It will be much easier to successfully toilet train the willing toddler when he or she is developmentally ready! However, if your child shows interest in toilet training, she certainly can be encouraged.

If you are interested in learning more about toilet training, ask your physician for a handbook.

## Safety

Once again, please take the time to read the sectioned injury prevention sheet. Accidents are a common and preventable cause of serious injury and death in young children.

## Suggested Reading

American Academy of Pediatrics, Homecare Books:  
Caring for Your Baby and Young Child  
Caring for Your Child's Language  
Caring for Your Child's Emotions

## Websites

www.aap.org  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
www.familydoctor.org  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
www.aafp.org  
HealthLink  
www.healthlink.com The Ottawa Council and Prevention

# Helping Your Toddler Learn About Food

(1-2 Years)

Toddlers are explorers. The foods they like one day may be different the next. That can answer to important questions you may have about your toddler's nutrition.

## What can I expect my child to do as he grows?

At 1 to 1 1/2 years of age, your child will

- Grasp and release foods with his fingers.
- Be able to hold a spoon that will not be able to use it very well.
- Be able to use a cup that will have difficulty bringing up of it.
- Chew foods that others are eating.

At 1 1/2 to 2 years old your child will

- Eat less than babies and children 3 years and older.
- Like to eat with his hands.
- Chew favorite foods.
- Get distracted easily.

At 2 years of age, your child will

- Be able to hold a cup.
- Be able to chew most foods.
- Chew definite likes and dislikes.

## How can I make mealtimes enjoyable?

- Be patient and understanding when your child makes a mess while she learns to feed herself—this is normal.
- Serve healthy foods for meals and snacks at scheduled times, but allow for flexibility.
- Use your child's favorite plate, bowl, cup, and eating utensils.



- Create a relaxed setting for meals (for example, turn off the TV).

## I am struggling with my child over food. Is this normal?

- Your child may struggle with you over food as an attempt to make his own decisions and become independent. Struggling over food may make him even more determined.
- Keep in mind that you are responsible for what, when, and where your child eats. Let your child decide whether to eat and how much.
- Continue to serve a new food even if your child has rejected it. It may take several times before your child accepts the food.

# ALLENTOWN PEDIATRIC & ADOLESCENT MEDICINE

## Home Care Suggestions for Mild Viral Infections

While there is no "cure" for infections caused by a virus, there are things you can do to help your child feel better until the virus runs its course:

### To relieve stuffy nose

- Thin the mucus using saline nose drops. Ask your pediatrician which ones to use. Never use nonprescription nose drops that contain any medicine.
- Clear your baby's nose with a suction bulb. Squeeze the bulb first, then gently put the rubber tip into one nostril and slowly release the bulb. This suction will draw the clogged mucus out of the nose. This works best for babies younger than 6 months.
- Use a cool-mist humidifier in your child's room. This helps to moisten the air and clear your child's nasal passages. Be sure to clean the humidifier often.

### To relieve fever

- Give your child acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Ask your pediatrician for the right dosage for your child's age and size. Don't give aspirin to your child because it has been associated with Reye syndrome, a disease that affects the liver and the brain. Check with your pediatrician first before giving any other cold medicines.

### To prevent dehydration

- Make sure your child drinks a lot of fluids. He may want clear liquids rather than milk or formula. He may eat more slowly or not feel like eating because he is having a hard time breathing.

If your child's virus doesn't seem to go away, or seems to get worse, call your pediatrician. Your pediatrician will let you know what the best treatment is for your child. In some cases, all you may need to do is make sure your child gets plenty of rest and eats a balanced diet. Other times, your child may need medicine. Most infections can be treated at home. However, if an infection becomes severe, your child may need to see the pediatrician and, rarely, go to the hospital.

### Prevention

Though there is no way to keep your child away from germs, there are some steps you can take to help prevent them from spreading, including

## ALLENTOWN PEDIATRIC & ADOLESCENT MEDICINE

### SAFETY CONCERNS

#### 1 to 2 Years of Age

Injuries are the leading cause of death of children younger than 4 years in the United States. Most of these deaths are preventable.

At this age your child can walk, run, climb, and jump. Your toddler wants to get everything into his mouth. She does not understand danger or remember what "no" means. Please make every effort to make your child's environment safe and provide constant supervision to prevent a life threatening accident!

#### GUNS

Children in homes where guns are present are in more danger of being shot by themselves, family members or friends, than by an intruder. It is best to keep all guns out of the home. If you do choose to keep a gun in your home, keep it unloaded and in a locked place separate from the ammunition. The ammunition should be locked up separately. Firearm safety needs to be a concern when your child visits other homes.

#### FALLS

To prevent serious falls, lock the doors to any dangerous areas. Use gates on stairways and install window guards on all windows above the first floor. Remove furniture with sharp corners in the rooms where your child plays. Remove dangling cords, wires, tablecloths, potted plants that are within reach of a toddler.

*If your child has a serious fall or does not act normally after a fall, call your doctor or 911.*

#### BURNS

The kitchen is a dangerous place for your child during meal preparation. Hot liquids, grease, and hot foods spilled on your child will cause serious burns. A safe place for child when you are cooking, eating, or unable to give your him your full attention is a playpen, crib, or high chair.

Your child will reach for your hot food or beverage, so don't leave them within your child's reach. Do not carry your child and hot liquids at the same time.

Never allow your child to walk near stoves, ovens, wall or floor heaters, or other hot appliances. Never leave a hot iron or curling/straightening iron within reach of a child.

To prevent hot water scalding, be certain your hot water is not set above 120°.

*If your child does get burned, put cold water on the burned area immediately. Then cover the burned area loosely with a bandage or clean cloth and call your doctor.*

#### **FIRE SAFETY**

Smoke alarms are necessary near the bedrooms and on each floor. Test the batteries monthly and replace every year. Carbon monoxide detectors are important as well. Have a working fire extinguisher and plan for escape.

#### **CHOKING**

Toddlers love to play in water. Never leave your child alone in or near a bathtub, pool of water, wading or swimming pool, or any other water, even for a moment. Empty all the water from a bathtub, pool, or any container of water immediately after use. Keep the door to the bathroom closed. Drowning can occur in less than two inches of water. Knowing how to swim does not make your child safe near or in water.

#### **POISONING**

Toddlers explore by putting everything in their mouths. Keep all safety caps on medicines and store them out and out-reach. Secure cleaning products, chemicals, toxic household products behind locked cabinets in your house, garage, or shed. Never store eye drop containers in your home. Keep all products in their original containers.

*If your child swallows something that could be poisonous, call the Poison Control Center at 800 or 878-7634 or Toll Free at 1-800-222-1222 immediately. Do not make your child vomit.*

#### **CAR SAFETY**

Car crashes are a great danger to your child's life and health. To prevent injuries from a motor vehicle accident make certain your child is in a properly installed car seat every time you travel in a car. Be sure the car seat is the right kind for your child's age and weight. Read and follow the instructions that come with the car seat and the instructions for using car safety seats in the owner's manual of your car. The safest place for all children to ride is in the back seat.

Do not leave your child alone in a car. Keep vehicles and their trunks locked. Death from prevent heat may occur in a closed car in warm weather in a short time.