

Great Destinations Pediatrics



AGE: 2 1/2 YEARS

GROWTH

Weight: lbs oz (%)
Height: inches (%)

EATING

Toddlers should eat three meals and two snacks a day. They should drink no more than 16 ounces of whole milk per day and eat three servings of calcium and vitamin D foods per day such as cheese, yogurt, or calcium containing milk of your choice. They should drink unlimited water and avoid juice, Gatorade, or other sugary drinks. Even 100% juice has more sugar than your toddler needs in one day which can lead to heart disease, diabetes and cause cavities. If your toddler is still on the bottle please switch them to a straw or sippy cup. Staying on the bottle past one year old can lead to dental cavities.

Your toddler should eat what the family is eating and if they refuse the food, let them go play, put their food in the fridge and if they are hungry later reheat their food and feed that to them. Avoid making a separate meal for your picky toddler, meaning "Do not be a short order cook!" Follow the my plate method of eating with $\frac{1}{2}$ of your toddler's plate fruit and vegetables and the other $\frac{1}{2}$ a healthy carbohydrate like brown rice and a protein food like turkey, fish, or beans. Offer milk or water with each meal. Avoid processed foods such as Goldfish, fruit snacks, Pop-Tarts, and sugary cereals. Now is the time for your toddlers to be very picky. Don't get discouraged as this is very common. Just keep offering your toddler healthy foods and they will eat eventually. For more information on picky eating, check out our handout.

Although it is always better to get your nutrients, vitamins, and minerals from fresh food, many of us, especially picky toddlers, fall short. We recommend a multivitamin with iron once a day and vitamin D3 600 IU/day.

DENTAL HEALTH

Brush your toddler's teeth every morning and night with a pea size amount of fluoride toothpaste. It is ok to let your child attempt to brush their own teeth but make sure you give their teeth a good cleaning as well. Floss their teeth daily. Take them to a dentist for routine cleanings every six months.

Avoid candy, juice, soda, and especially fruit snacks as these can all cause cavities and fruit snacks stick in the deep grooves of the molars causing cavities.

DEVELOPMENT

Your toddler should now be talking in short sentences and have at least 100 words in their vocabulary. A stranger should understand about 50% of their speech. Toddlers at this age enjoy music, have a sense of humor, play pretend,

and show affection. They should be able to communicate their wants and needs and if they are in a good mood, can follow a two-step command. They should now be in a toddler bed or regular bed with a rail (not a crib) and should be able to fall asleep on their own and stay in bed. Reading to your toddler is extremely important for their language and social development. Reading at least 30 minutes a day will help your toddler get ready for preschool and it helps with speech and early reading skills. Teach your toddler body parts, shapes, how to count, and the names of body parts. Dress your toddler in clothes that are easy to potty train in and start reading books to them about potty training. If they show an interest then encourage them and start the training process. If they resist, then wait until they are ready.

SCREEN TIME

Your child should only have 1-2 hours per day of TV or media time including computers, video games, tablets and phone time.

SAFETY

1. Climbing-If your toddler can climb on it, bolt it to the wall.
2. Car Seats-Continue to use a five point car seat in the back seat.
3. Water Safety-Keep your pool surrounded by a fence with a locking gate. Knowing how to swim does not ensure your child's safety. Never leave your toddler alone in the bath tub. Keep bathroom doors closed. Never leave cleaning buckets or play pool filled with water. Make it a rule to watch the water drain out the tub and to empty play pools immediately after use.
4. Poisons-Keep all medications and cleaners out of reach.
5. Guns-Store guns and ammunition separately. Keep guns out of reach and locked away.
6. Burns-Keep matches, lighters, and cigarettes out of reach. Use smoke alarms. Do not allow your child to play around hot liquids. Use back burners on stove and keep handles turned in.
7. Stairs and Windows-Use secure gates in front of stairs. Make sure your toddler cannot push on windows and fall out.
8. Cords and Outlets-Keep all outlets covered and cords up.
9. Dog Bites-Watch your toddler around animals, especially dogs. Never leave your child alone with a dog. Most bites are caused by the family dog.
10. Streets-Teach your child to be careful near streets, though they may not remember such instructions. Always supervise your child.
11. Helmets-If your child is on a tricycle or bicycle, make sure you have them wear a bike helmet.
12. Sunscreen-If your child will be outside for longer than 15 minutes, use sunscreen SPF 15 or higher.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Your child's next appointment is at 3 years of age for a well check and immunizations.