

HEALTH ISSUES

Supervise all feedings.

Offer healthy snack and meal choices, limiting sugars. Toddlers often don't eat meals well because they graze with snacks all day - that is fine, just make sure those snacks are healthy snacks (yogurt, peanut butter, vegetables, fruits, or dry cereals).

Avoid direct sun exposure. Use a sunblock - SPF 50.

Brush your child's teeth twice daily with a small amount (the size of a grain of rice) of toothpaste. Continue to bring your child to the dentist every six months for cavity prevention.

SAFETY ISSUES

Continue safe car seat use. Read instructions for proper installation. Here are some general guidelines:

Place seat in the back seat. By now the child can face forward in an appropriate toddler car seat (with 5 point harness).

Never put a child under 13 years of age in the front seat of a car with a passenger side airbag.

Turn the hot water heater in your home down so the hottest water you can get from the faucet is 120 degrees.

Install and test your smoke detector in or near your baby's room.

Childproof your home (poisons, medicines, guns, plastic bags, sharp objects, cords, outlets, cigarettes, hot liquids, and latches on cabinets). Make sure any playground environment is safe.

Obtain your local Poison Control Center's phone number and keep it on hand

Do not keep 5 gallon buckets in your home (to prevent drowning).

Avoid choke hazards (peanuts, popcorn, hard candy, chewing gum, small toy pieces).

Use a bike helmet for your toddler (and yourself) if riding on the back of a bike.

Supervise activities, especially around lawnmowers, large dogs, cars.

Place crib mattress on lowest setting. Consider changing to a toddler bed if your child can physically climb out of the crib (risk of falling) or if the top of the railing of the crib comes to the nipple-line of the chest or below when child is standing in the crib with the mattress on the lowest setting and the rail on the highest setting (risk of falling out).

Place gates on stairways and bedroom doorway.

Do not keep a firearm in your home. If you must, make sure it is locked and out of reach from your curious child.

YOUR CHILD SHOULD...

Understand simple commands ("take the toy to Daddy").

Be able to say 10-20 words or more, combining two words into phrases ("Mommy Bye-bye").

Kick and throw a ball.

Stack 5 blocks on top of each other.

Feed self.

YOU SHOULD...

Praise your child at every opportunity.

Talk and sing regularly to your child. Listen to music together with your child.

Continue to read books interactively with your child.

Encourage opportunities for safely exploring his or her environment.

Be consistent with rules. You decide how strict or liberal to be, just make sure you are consistent.

Keep discipline brief. "Time-out" is usually effective at this age (1 minute for each year of life).

Offer choices to your child at every opportunity to allow decision-making.

Not allow hitting, biting, or mean behavior.

Allow for self-care opportunities.

Have a bedtime routine and put your child to sleep in his or her own room. Expect nightmares or night terrors on occasion.

Keep a family picture near child's bed so it can be seen at night.

Eat meals as a family. Expect a poor appetite and don't argue with your child about not eating well.

Try to allow expression of feelings (anger, joy, sadness, fear).

Offer opportunity for potty training but do not encourage unless your child seems ready (usually 18 months to 3 years).

Expect self-exploration of genitalia and start to use correct anatomy terminology.

Expect your child to not want to share, but encourage him or her to do so anyway.

Be an example of the type of person you want your child to grow up to be - they are like sponges and absorb everything around them!

IMMUNIZATION...

Your child may have received some immunizations if they were behind schedule.