



MERCY MEDICAL GROUP

Pediatric Development - 18 Months

Date: _____

_____’s **growth record**

Weight: _____ pounds _____ ounces

Length: _____ inches

Head circumference: _____ inches

DEVELOPMENT

At this age, the typical child may:

- Throw a ball
- Know body parts
- Stack three blocks
- Understand and follow one step directions
- Walk backwards
- Say five to 10 words and use two-word phrases
- Mimic chores
- Listen to a story
- Be possessive about things and cannot be expected to share
- Show negative behavior and tantrums
- Exhibit self-comforting behaviors such as thumb-sucking and masturbation
- Show readiness for toilet training. Introduce the potty-chair now before the struggle for independence begins.

DISCIPLINE

At 18 months, toddlers become even more mobile and curious. Discipline remains a delicate balance between allowing them to explore and protecting them by designating certain “off-limits” areas. Set a small number of rules and enforce them consistently. Keep discipline brief and provide feedback and reassurance once negative behavior has stopped. Remember that parents and caregivers must work together and set consistent limits.

STIMULATION

Your child is now entering the problem-solving stage of development. You can help him or her learn by:

- Allowing your child the freedom to explore in a safe place
- Reading, singing and talking to your child
- Limiting the watching of television
- Encouraging self-care, self-expression and choices
- Praising good behaviors
- Acting as a role model for healthy habits and good behavior since a child at this age will imitate parental actions.

NUTRITION

- Eat meals as a family at the table whenever possible, and allow child to feed self.
- Understand that your 18-month-old toddler may like to feed self with utensils as well as hands.
- Provide healthy choices of foods and snacks and expect your child to eat small portions.

- Try to avoid sweet or salty snacks.
- Ignore rejected food since decreased appetite is common.
- Avoid using food as a reward or punishment.
- Continue giving your child whole milk, as he or she should be weaned off the bottle. Twelve to 18 ounces of milk is a good amount for this age.
- Avoid choke-hazard foods such as peanuts, hot dogs, grapes, raisins and chewing gum.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Your child may be receiving immunizations at the 18-month visit. Discuss with your physician which immunizations your child should receive and the potential side effects. To help with the possibility of some of the side effects, Tylenol® (acetaminophen) may be given every four to six hours over the next 24 to 48 hours. If you have any questions about your child's reaction to the vaccine, please talk with your health care provider.

SAFETY

As the toddler's mobility increases, safety becomes increasingly important.

- Make protecting your child from accidents a priority.
- Secure doors (children of this age can open doors or simple latches).
- Take extra care when the routines change. During vacations, holidays, stressful events or when your child is tired, accidents may happen.
- Know that toddlers lack behavioral self-control and memory to protect them from danger.
- Watch for climbing. Falls are common.
- Supervise outdoor play.
- Ensure safety caps are on medicine bottles.
- Watch for dry cleaner plastic bags and balloons, which are a suffocation danger.
- Watch for pan handles hanging over the stove.
- Continue using the car seat. The seat may now face forward but should remain in the back seat.
- Use gates to block stairwells and hazardous areas.
- Use sunscreen for any outdoor exposure.

SOURCE: American Academy of Pediatrics