Well-Child Checkup: 2 Years

CHILD'S NAME	DOB	DATE OF VISIT	NEXT VISIT	LENGTH	PERCENTILE	WEIGHT	PERCENTILE

Reaching Milestones & Activities

Social, language and motor skills are developing quickly during this age.

At 2 years old, your child may start to:

- Build towers of 4 or more blocks
- Might use one hand more than the other
- Get excited when with other children
- Show more and more independence
- Follow simple instructions
- Repeat words overheard in conversation

Development Screening

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends children to be screened for general development and autism. Ask your child's health care provider about your child's developmental screening or to receive more information.

Toilet Training Takes Time

Some children are ready to toilet train at age 2 or 2½. Have a potty chair ready if your child shows interest, but do not pressure him or her. Punishment NEVER has a place in toilet training. Teach words your child can use to tell you he or she has to use the bathroom. Children who are toilet trained during the day often still need diapers or pull ups for naps and at night.

Toilet Training Support is Available!

Avera has a team of family life experts who can provide additional support throughout your parenting journey that includes toilet training. Call 605-322-3660 or email at familylifeeducators@avera.org

Protect Your Child - Immunizations

Your child should have received most of the recommended vaccines at this age to protect him or her from very serious (even life-threatening) diseases. The country's top doctors and experts help decide the vaccinations that will help keep your child safe.

If you don't know, make sure to ask your child's health care provider. It's very important for you to track your child's vaccination records, especially if your state requires certain vaccines for child care or school.

- **Tip:** You can download a checklist at avera.org/shots.

Make sure to schedule flu shots for your child and family every year. For the best protection, children should receive the flu shot by the end of October each year.

Getting the flu shot every year is important because the disease changes over time.

Nutrition

By now, your child should be drinking from a cup. Your child may eat a lot of small meals; 2 year olds may be less hungry and eat smaller amounts because they are no longer in the rapid growth infant stage. Let your child feed himself or herself. Whenever possible, offer your child finger foods instead of cooked ones that require a fork or spoon to eat. Remember, there will be lots of spills as your child learns.

- Make healthy food fun! Serve foods with a variety of colors, textures, flavors and temperatures.
- Switch from whole milk to low-fat or nonfat milk. Ask your health care provider which is best for your child. Aim for 2 to 3 cups per day; do not give more than 24 ounces of milk per day. Cheese and yogurt are good dairy sources.
- Limit juice to no more than 4 ounces (1/2 cup) per day. Make sure the label says 100% juice and serve it in a cup, not a bottle. Even 100% juice is high in sugar and too much can ruin a child's appetite for other healthy foods. Avoid soda or other sweet drinks.

Choking Prevention

Your child is still learning to chew and swallow food properly. Your child may even gulp food down fast to get on with playing. For that reason, the risk of choking is high.

Always watch your child when he or she is eating. Avoid foods that have high choking potential: marshmallows, popcorn, nuts, raisins, hard candy, string cheese.

Cut these foods into small pieces: hot dogs, grapes, raw fruits and vegetables, meat. Don't let your child walk around with food. This is a choking risk.

- **Tip:** Learn and stay up to date on your CPR skills. Parents can take CPR classes to be prepared for emergency situations. Talk to your health care provider for more information.

Picky Eater?
Toddlers can be picky eaters! Keep offering a lot of different foods at meal time. Remember, your child may need to taste a new food 10 or more times before accepting it.

Sleep

At this age, children should sleep anywhere between 11 to14 hours (including naps) a day. If you have any questions about your child's sleep habits, talk to your child's health care provider. Most sleep problems can be easily treated. He or she may ask you to keep a sleep log or have additional suggestions to improving your child's sleep habits.

Help Your Child Learn and Grow!

Positive Discipline Strategies for Tantrums
Tantrums are normal at this age. Toddlers use tantrums to try to get things they want or need. Tantrums tend to get better after the age of 3. Your toddler is starting to learn what's allowed and what isn't. He or she may test some rules to see how you react. Use positive discipline to teach children to manage their behavior and keep them safe:

- **Give your attention and show that you care.** Pay attention to and praise behaviors you like and ignore those you want to discourage. Redirect to a different activity when needed. Try to stay consistent as much as possible, including enforcing limits. Try short timeouts if needed.
- **Do your best to stay calm.** Stand back and wait for tantrums to end on their own, then comfort your child. Ask friends and family for help.
- **Model good behavior.** Your child looks up to you. Teach your toddler not to hit, to bite or to use physical force against others. Model positive behaviors you would like to see in your children.

***Remember: spanking and harsh words are harmful and do not work.**

Encourage Independence
Teach your child independence and self-help skills, such as teeth brushing, eating and dressing/undressing.

Expose and Engage in Educational Activities
Spend quality time with your child through fun and educational activities, like trips to the zoo or library. Encourage his or her curiosity and ability to recognize common objects.

The toddler years can be challenging! Don't be afraid to talk to your child's health care provider with any questions.

Your child's health care provider can help explain their development and ways to effectively guide your child's behavior.

Caring for You and Your Family

This age can be hard on parents, especially if your child is strong-willed. It is normal to feel frustrated at times. Take time out for yourself and share your feelings with friends or other parents.

- Plan family time together. This can be as simple as a walk to the park.
- Parents should continue to nurture their relationship with each other. A weekly date night is a great idea, even if it is simply having dinner together after your child is asleep.

Screen Time and Technology Use: 0 – 60 Minutes a Day

You may introduce digital media at this age, but choose high-quality programming and/or apps that encourage interactive play with you and your child. Toddlers learn best when you are involved with their learning. If you choose to introduce screens, co-watch high-quality educational content.

Help them understand what they are seeing and limit exposure to less than 1 hour per day. Reminder: Don't leave your child unattended while using digital media.

- Watch educational programs with your child, and interact with him or her.
- Avoid fast-paced programs and apps with lots of distracting content, advertisements and violence.
- Toddlers don't yet understand advertisements or animations, and may not understand the difference between real-world people and fictional cartoons.
- Avoid using screens as a babysitter, as a reward, as punishment or to stop tantrums.

Safety Tips and Helpful Reminders

Car Seats
Always make sure to refer to your car seat manual to make sure your seat is the right size for your child's height and weight. These recommendations are not universal for all car seats. If your child no longer fits in a rear-facing car seat, you should use a forward-facing seat. Once your child outgrows the forward-facing car seat, it's time to travel in a booster seat.

Safety Outside the Home

It's impossible to childproof everything, especially the outside world. Here are some helpful tips and reminders to keep your child safe.

- If you take your child to a playground, do a quick scan of the area to make sure all equipment is safe to use. Peek into slides and tunnels, and inspect the grounds for broken glass, rusty or sharp surfaces, or anything else that could cause an injury. Playgrounds are one of the most common places for fall-related injuries with children.
- If you're pushing your child in a stroller, use the elevator rather than escalators if available. Strollers can tip and flip on escalators since the steps are narrow.
- Make sure your child is properly strapped in to shopping carts and strollers if a belt is available.

The Importance of Water Safety

Drowning is the leading preventable death for children ages 1 through 4. Never leave your child alone in water. All kids should learn how to swim.

Poison Prevention

Active, curious toddlers can be at risk for poisoning. Keep all cleaners, medicines, toiletries and chemicals out of reach in a locked cabinet. Have the poison control number (1-800-222-1222) readily available or program it into your phones.

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