

Your Child at Fifteen Months

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DEVELOPMENT:

All babies develop at their own rate. At this age you may notice your child:

- Walks steadily and may walk backward
- Stoops to pick up objects and then keeps walking
- Crawls up stairs
- Tries to climb on objects
- Holds a cup well and starts to use a spoon
- Scribbles and puts blocks in a cup
- Says three to six words other than “mama” and “dada”
- Follows simple commands such as, “Come here”
- Points to things he or she wants
- Points out body parts
- Recognizes himself or herself in a mirror
- Hugs others
- Likes looking at books
- Starts to say, “no,” and may have tantrums

IMUNIZATIONS: DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis), Pevnar13 (pneumococcal), and HIB

Possible vaccine side effects include:

- Fever
- More irritability or fussiness
- Redness or swelling at the site of the shot.
- Rash

If needed, you can give your baby acetaminophen (Tylenol). Ask your Provider for the correct dose. Contact your Provider if your child's symptoms are severe or last longer than 48 hours.

NOTE: There is a slight risk of fever or rash seven to 12 days after your child is vaccinated. This shouldn't be something to be concerned about for your child. But, if a fever or rash does develop, your child should not be around other people with a significantly weakened immune system.

Next visit: Age 18 months

- LABS: Your child may need to be tested for anemia, lead poisoning or tuberculosis. Talk with your Provider.

NUTRITION:

Weight gain is still slower than during the first year. The amount your child eats will vary. This is normal. Do not force your child to eat. Offer healthy foods and allow him or her to decide how much to eat.

- Let your child feed himself or herself.
- Stop using bottles but keep breast-feeding, if you like.
- Offer mostly table foods. Do not give your child small, hard and round foods that he or she can choke on such as nuts, popcorn and whole grapes.
- Children at this age do not need juice. If you choose to give juice to your child, limit juice to no more than four ounces a day.
- Give your child whole milk but not more than 24 ounces a day. If your child does not like milk, serve other calcium-rich foods such as yogurt and cheese every day.
- Keep giving your child vitamin D and/or fluoride supplements as your provider suggests.



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SAFETY

- Children at this age need constant attention and guidance. They are explorers and have no sense of fear. This means that they can quickly climb playground equipment, go up stairs and explore electrical outlets and medicine cabinets.
- Use a car seat that is convertible and rear-facing for as long as your child meets the seat's weight and height recommendations or at least until he or she is two years old.
- Keep following safety guidelines when your child is close to water, near stairs or on high surfaces. Kids can climb onto counters and tables quickly.
- Cook on the back burners of your stove to reduce risk of burns.
- Make sure that all chemicals, medications, cleaners and other hazardous materials are out of your child's reach.
- Be sure to watch your child closely when visiting friends and family who have not babyproofed their home.
- Put a hat on your child and apply sunscreen with at least SPF 30 when he or she is outdoors.
- Make sure that the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in your home are working.
- If you have guns in your home, keep them unloaded, locked and stored away from ammunition.
- If you are worried about violence in your home, please speak with your provider or contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (1-800-799-7233) or ndvh.org.
- Keep the Poison Control Hotline posted on your refrigerator: 1-800-222-1222.

SLEEP

- Encourage interest in books by reading a few with your child every night before bed.
- Nightmares or bedtime fears can start at this age. It is OK to respond quickly and comfort your child, but put your child to bed while he or she is awake—let your child fall asleep in his or her own bed.
- Most children this age still nap during the day but may combine their daytime sleep into one nap.
- If you have questions about your child's sleep habits, talk with your provider.

DISCIPLINE

You may feel as though the terrible twos are already here. Around this age many children test limits, practice saying “no,” and have temper tantrums. This is because your child is curious and feels more independent. When your child bangs a spoon on the table he or she is learning different sounds. When your child keeps throwing a cup and watching it fall, he or she is learning cause and effect. At this age, toddlers want to do things on their own. Your child will resist your help in getting dressed or eating. Your child may get upset when he or she can't do something or when you do not understand what he or she is trying to tell you. This often leads to temper tantrums.

Be patient and know what to expect of your child—this will make things easier. So will childproofing the house and creating spaces where he or she can play freely. Do not spank or hit your child. Praise good behavior and set consistent limits. If you get overly angry or frustrated with your child, put him or her in a safe place, and take a few moments to calm down.

FOCUS ON FAMILY

This age can be hard, especially if your child is strong-willed. It is normal to feel frustrated at times. Talk with your partner about how to handle these moments. Taking time for yourself helps. Share your feelings with friends or other parents.

PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT

- Let your child choose between two options, both of which are OK with you. For example, he or she can choose between two snacks to eat, two books to read or two pairs of shoes to wear.
- Speak to your child clearly and in adult language—do not use baby talk.
- Encourage him or her to repeat words.
- Describe your child's activities. When he or she eats say, “Wow, Jack is eating his apple,” for example.
- Scribble, sort shapes and stack blocks with your child.
- Keep reading to your child daily.
- Do not allow your child to watch TV or videos.
- Let your child watch others using the toilet but do not force toilet training.
- Brush your child's teeth twice a day. Use only water or a small amount of toothpaste that does not have fluoride in it. Teach your child to spit after brushing.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- American Academy of Pediatrics: aap.org; American Academy of Family Physicians: aafp.org; Immunization information: immunize.org, cdc.gov/vaccines, vaccine.chop.edu, familyprovider.org and vaccineinformation.org
- Suggested reading:
 - *1, 2, 3, The Toddler Years* by Irene DeZande
 - *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age Five* by American Academy of Pediatrics, Stephen Shelov, M.D.
 - *Child of Mine: Feeding with Love and Good Sense* by Ellyn Satter
 - *Positive Discipline A–Z: From Toddlers to Teens, 1001 Solutions to Everyday Parenting Problems* by Jane Nelsen, et al.
 - *Your Baby and Child: From Birth to Age Five* by Penelope Leach
 - *Your One Year Old: The Fun Loving, Fussy 12–24 Month Old* by Louise Ames
- Books for your child:
 - *The Belly Button Book* by Sandra Boynton
 - *Goodnight Moon, Runaway Bunny and Little Fur Family* by Margaret Wise Brown
 - *Pat the Bunny* by Dorothy Kunhardt
 - *Tumble Bumble* by Felicia Bond
- Other books are available at aap.org/bookstore.