

Mendon Pediatrics

3 Year Visit

Next Visit: 4 Years

Nutrition

- Set good eating habits. Eat healthy meals together.
- Low fat or skim milk can now be given instead of whole milk.
- Snack suggestions: fruits, yogurts, crackers, cheese.
- Continue to offer a variety of foods, especially healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables.
- Avoid fast food restaurants and junk foods.
- Desserts and candy should be used as a treat, not at daily mealtime.

Safety

- All children are safer in the backseat. Car seat until 40 pounds or 4 years old, then booster seat until 80 pounds and 7 years old.
- Keep children out of the sun at peak times (10am - 3pm) and always protect with a sunblock of SPF 15 or higher.
- Insect repellent should contain less than 30% DEET.
- Accidental poisonings and choking are common at this age. Lock up medicines and cleaning solutions. Put the poison center number on the telephone **1-800-222-1222**.
- Never leave a child unattended in the bathtub. Swimming pools must have locked gates and fences.

Teeth

- Brush teeth daily. Begin regular visits to the dentist if you have not already done so.

Healthy Habits

- Read to your child every day. Encourage story-telling, naming opposites, and comparisons.
- Introduce the alphabet and numbers.
- Limit television and computer viewing time to no more than one hour per day and select quality programs.
- Sing songs and say nursery rhymes with your child.
- Play catch, encourage running, jumping and tricycle riding (with a helmet).
- Practice cutting (with safety scissors), painting, drawing, coloring and puzzles.
- Encourage good table manners and use of fork and spoon.
- Praise positive behaviors, for example learning a new skill, being helpful or cooperative.
- "Catch them being good", instead of noticing and giving attention to the negative behaviors; give attention to positive behavior.
- Help children learn how to resolve conflicts and handle anger without using violence. For instance, "Use your words", "Tell me how you feel", "Let's talk about it", "What can you do instead of hitting".
- Masturbation is a normal phenomenon in this age group. Do not be alarmed.
- Teach your child to look both ways before crossing the street. Do not allow unsupervised outside play at this age. Most children cannot be counted on for street safety until the age of five.
- Parents need to set limits for their children; yet most children at this age wish to feel "in charge". When possible, give your child the opportunity to make decisions by offering two choices (for example, would you like Cheerios or pancakes for breakfast? or would you like to wear your white shirt or your blue one?)
- Prepare a plan for your child in case of loss. Review your life insurance coverage to make sure it provides for your child and your will should include all members of your family. Also discuss a plan of guardianship for your child.

Developmental Milestones

- Identify 4 pictures by naming.
- Identify a friend by name.
- Speak and be understood most of the time (even by strangers).
- Use prepositions.
- Broad jump.
- Copy a circle.
- Identify 4 colors.

Suggested Reading

What to Expect the Toddler Years, by A.Eisenberg

Guide to Your Child's Symptoms, by American Academy of Pediatrics

Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5, by American Academy of Pediatrics

Raising Your Spirited Child, by Mary Sheedy Kurcinka

Toilet Learning, A.Mack

1-2-3 Magic: Effective Discipline for Children 2-12, by Thomas W. Phelan Ph.D.

Developmental Evaluations

Evaluation and treatment of motor and speech delays are available to all preschool age children at no cost to the patient. Evaluations can be scheduled through your school district Committee on Preschool Special Education. Call the school district, ask for the Committee on Preschool Special Education, and ask for an evaluation to be arranged per your pediatrician's recommendation.

Children allowed to develop at their own speed will usually win the race of life.