
YOUR GROWING CHILD...

Children grow, change, and learn differently. Here are some tips to help you enjoy and keep your child healthy and safe. Please contact us if you have questions or concerns about your child. Metropolitan Pediatrics offers a 24/7 nurse triage line by contacting the scheduling line at each office.

Health:

- Regular well visits are important to ensure normal growth and development.
 - Children need a well child check at 3 years of age.
 - The next well child check is at 4 years of age.
- Appetite will vary depending on growth and activity.
 - Children often eat a lot one time and not much the next.
 - You decide what to serve, when and where. Offer the same food you make for everyone else. Let your child decide how much (if any) to eat.
 - Offer 3 meals and 1-2 healthy snacks per day.
 - To prevent choking, your child should never be left unattended while eating. Avoid nuts, popcorn and small hard candy until 5 years of age. These are easy for your child to choke on. Table foods that aren't cut appropriately can be high risk (for example: hot dogs, grapes). Never allow your child to walk, run, or ride in the car with food in his mouth.
- Dental visits are recommended once every 6 months.
 - Brush teeth twice per day. Children's toothpaste with fluoride is recommended in small quantities (pea-sized on the brush).
 - Juice and other sugar-sweetened beverages are not recommended for children.
- May sleep 10-11 hours at night and nap once per day (some children may phase out afternoon nap at this age).
 - Keep a regular bedtime routine.
 - May be afraid of the dark and going to bed. Read bedtime stories and use a night light to comfort and help them feel safe.
- Children need regular exercise, like playing games outside. Aim for a minimum of 1 hour per day.

Learning:

- Children at this age usually:
 - Know their name, age, and speak clearly most of the time. Talk with your child and play word games (singing ABC's). Read with your child often.
 - Like to help around the house.
 - Start to jump, kick a ball, and ride a tricycle.
 - Like to make their own decisions and may have tantrums. Give choices when possible (which clothes to wear, books to read, and places to go).
 - Test boundaries. It is best to set limits, be consistent, and use distractions. Praise your child often!
- Remember that an Early Childhood Screening is required before starting school. Be on the lookout for information from your school district about scheduling between 3 ½ to 4 years of age.

- Limited screen time is allowed for children older than 2 years of age. The American Academy of Pediatrics advises less than 2 hours of age-appropriate screen time per day.
- Consider enrolling in Parent Powered Texts to receive tips for learning and development at thinksmall.org/texts

Safety:

- Children should always use a forward-facing harnessed seat properly secured in the back seat until they outgrow the weight limit (typically 40-60 pounds, depending on the individual seat)
- Require helmet use when your child is riding any wheeled toy. Be a good example!
- Discuss privacy and safe touch.
- Discuss safety and strangers.
- Children are curious. Lock up your guns and bullets separately. It is the law and will decrease the risk of accidental injury or death caused by firearms.
- Your child may wander away from you when you aren't looking. Watch your child carefully.
- Prevent injury from burns. Keep your child away from the stove and oven. Turn pot handles to the back of the stove.
- Provide close supervision anytime you will be around water (bathtub, pool, lake) and avoid standing water in your home (buckets). Model appropriate water safety by wearing life jackets on or near the water.
- Teach your child respect for animals. Never allow the child to play around an animal who is sleeping or eating.
- Don't let anyone smoke or vape around your child.
- Use sunscreen and sun-protective clothing when spending time outdoors.
- Enforce that your child wears a helmet when riding a bike/trike.
- Use smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and check them twice per year (such as at daylight savings time).
- Minnesota Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222