

## Preschool Well Visit

In addition to checking your child's growth, you can also expect your doctor to:

1. Ask questions, address concerns and offer guidance about how your child is:

- Eating. Growth is slow and steady during the preschool years. Offer three meals and two nutritious snacks a day. Even if your child is a picky eater, keep offering a variety of healthy foods.
- Peeing and pooping. Your preschooler may be potty trained or using the potty during the day. Even so, it is common for kids this age to have an occasional accident during the day and still need a diaper at night. If he has not yet shown the signs of being ready to potty train, tell your doctor. Also, let the doctor know if he is constipated, has diarrhea, seems to be "holding it" or was potty trained but is now having problems.
- Sleeping. Preschoolers sleep about 11-12 hours a day. Most children this age still take a nap during the day.
- Developing. By 3 years, it's common for many kids to:
  - ◆ string three or more words together to form short sentences
  - ◆ be understood most of the time when they speak
  - ◆ pedal a tricycle
  - ◆ walk up stairs alternating feet
  - ◆ copy a circle
  - ◆ dress and undress with a little help
  - ◆ play make-believe
  - ◆ take turns while playing

2. Perform a physical exam that will include an eye exam, teeth exam, listening to the heart and lungs and paying attention to speech and language development.

3. Update immunizations (see recommendations at [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov))

4. Order tests. Your doctor may assess your child's risk for anemia, high cholesterol and tuberculosis and order tests, if needed.

### Looking ahead

Here are some things to keep in mind:

#### Feeding

1. Preschoolers should get 2 cups of low-fat or nonfat milk (or equivalent low-fat dairy products) daily.
2. Limit juice to no more than 4-6 ounces a day.

3. Limit foods and drinks that are high in sugar and fat.

4. Make time to eat together as a family most nights of the week.

#### Routine Care

1. If your child gives up his afternoon nap, be sure to allow for some quiet "winding down" time during the day. You may also need to adjust bedtime to ensure he gets enough sleep.

2. Nightmares and night awakenings are common at this age. Establish a consistent bedtime routine to help your child fall asleep at night. Avoid scary or upsetting images or stories, especially before bed.

3. If he's enrolled in preschool, visit the classroom together a few times before school starts. If he's not in preschool, look for opportunities to interact and play with other kids.

4. Limit screen time (spent on TV shows, DVDs, smartphones, video games, tablets and computers) to no more than one to two hours a day of quality children's programming.

5. Read to your child every day.

6. Establish reasonable and consistent rules and reinforce positive behaviors.

7. Do not spank. Use time-outs instead.

8. Have your child brush his teeth twice a day with a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Schedule a dental visit to have his teeth examined and cleaned.

#### Safety

1. Have a safe play area and allow plenty of time for exploring, make-believe and active play.

2. Make sure playground equipment is well maintained and age-appropriate. Surfaces should be soft to absorb falls (sand, rubber mats or a deep layer of wood or rubber chips).

3. Always supervise your child around water and when playing near streets.

4. Apply sunscreen of SPF 30 or higher at least 15 minutes before going outside to play and reapply about every two hours.

5. Limit his exposure to secondhand smoke, which increases the risk of heart and lung disease.

6. Make sure he always wears a helmet when riding a tricycle or bicycle.

7. Use a forward-facing car seat with a harness in the back seat until your child reaches the highest weight or height limit allowed by the car-seat manufacturer.

# Preschool Well Visit (continued)

8. Protect your child from gun injuries by not keeping a gun in the home. If you do have a gun, keep it unloaded and locked away. Ammunition should be locked up separately. Make sure kids cannot access the keys.



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