

My One Year Old and Me

Recommendations from your Pediatrician

Happy Birthday to You!!!

Congratulations! Can you believe it has been one year since you first met your little one? This is such an exciting milestone. Time really does fly! At one year of age you will notice a new found independence in your little one and some of the following developmental milestones:

Walking – Some one year olds will start walking independently after months of standing, cruising and finally taking a few steps. She has now built up the confidence to take several steps on her own. With this new found independence comes even more responsibility as a parent. She must be constantly monitored and be near by. At the beginning she is still very unstable and will fall frequently. Her stance will be wide and she may even look bow-legged. This is all a normal part of her development. If your one year old is not walking yet – Don't worry. It is normal for many one year olds to wait until even 15 months to start walking.

Talking – By this age, most one year olds are stringing together consonants “da-da” and “ma-ma”. They know that when they are saying “mama” and “dada” they are actually talking about Mom and Dad. It is also typical for one year olds to have one or two other words. These are often “hi” or “uh-oh”. They will babble, now more with inflection than before, and may call objects things in their own language. They may watch your mouth and study how you are creating sounds. Talk to her constantly. Label your actions with words. This will help her develop her language skills.

Fine Motor Skills – Your one year olds fine motor skills have improved and will bang two blocks together and put one object inside another. Give her blocks, empty containers, clear containers and cheerios. Let her practice putting objects in and out of a bucket. You will also notice by one year your child drops objects voluntarily. Allow her sit in her high chair and finger feed. In addition, most one year olds have figured out that hands are used for gestures and will wave ‘hi’ or ‘bye-bye’. This is a good time to introduce some sign language if you have not already. It will help her to be less frustrated when she is trying to communicate an idea across.

Uses Objects Correctly/Imitation – She will drink from a cup, push buttons on the phone, might try to brush her hair, and if you're lucky want to brush her teeth. She will imitate your gestures. Give her the opportunity to do these things when you are doing them.

Feeding

-At one year of age the most important change is switching from formula to whole milk. It needs to be whole milk because your child needs the extra fat for her brain development. Switching to whole milk can be gradual. Mix a few ounces of milk in a regular formula bottle for a few days. Then increase to half and half and so on until after 7-10 days your child is only drinking whole milk. If you prefer to switch all at once that is fine too but you may notice some constipation. Don't get discouraged this will get better with time. Your baby should have 16-24 oz per day of whole milk.

-If a mother is still breastfeeding she can continue to do so as long as she desires. There are still a lot of nutrients in her breast milk for her child.

-At one is a good time to wean off the bottle. First introduce a sippy cup if this has not been done. It may be easier for her to drink from a sippy cup with a soft spout. You may have to try a few different ones. Prolonged bottle-feeding has been associated with cavities and increased ear infections.

- At one year your child will start to want more table food and less baby food. Let her try new things and offer her food you are eating. Continue to encourage fruits and vegetables.

- Less juice is better. Give no more than 4 oz of juice per day. It is better to give slices of an orange than orange juice. Most juices have added artificial sugars with little nutritional value. Your doctor might recommend some juices to help with constipation but if your one year old does not need them don't give them.

-Set mealtimes and stick to them. Put your one year old in her highchair and allow her to finger feed. Let her decide when she is full. Don't try to push her into eating more because you are worried she didn't eat enough. When she is done allow her to get down but try not to give in to too many snacks between meals.

Sleeping

Unless you would like a family bed, by one year of age your child should be sleeping in her crib for 10-12 hours per night of uninterrupted sleep. You can help her do this by putting her in her crib for naps and allowing her to fall asleep on her own. The more rocking, walking, bottle feeding she does before bedtime, the more she is going to need when she wakes in between sleep cycles in the middle of night. If she does wake in the middle of night, go to her and reassure her you are there. The less you can do the better. If you pick her up and rock her or give her a bottle she is going to expect and need these things to fall back asleep. It may be hard to hear her cry but allowing her to figure out how to self-soothe is one of the most important things you can do as a parent. Ask your doctor for other sleep techniques if you have specific questions.

Temper Tantrums

Yes, sometimes the "Terrible Twos" come early. Your one year old may begin to throw temper tantrums, screaming, kicking and crying until she gets what she wants. Most of the time these tantrums are from frustration but they can also be from over-stimulation. It is best not to feed into these tantrums. As long as your child is in a safe place where she can't hurt herself, it is best to ignore this behavior.

Discipline

Now is a good time to start asserting yourself and setting limits when appropriate. Discipline is not meant to be a form of punishment but to ensure safety. At this age it is best to re-direct when your child is doing something that might be harmful. For example, if she wants to climb up the stairs, pull out her favorite book to read to get her attention. Or if she has started to bite or hit you as most one year olds do, tell her in a stern but non-screaming voice, "It is not nice to hit" and put her down or again distract her. The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend spanking as this only enforces aggression. As she grows, time-out is the preferred method.

Safety Check

- Car seats- most infant car seats are appropriate for up to 20 pounds. Your child will probably need a convertible car seat. Keep the car seat rear facing for as long as possible. This rear facing position has been proven to be safer in the event of a collision.
- Use gates at the top and bottom of stairs. Never underestimate your child's ability to climb.
- Never smoke or carry hot liquids or foods while holding your child. Do not let her crawl/walk around hot stoves, ovens. It is best to keep her out of the kitchen when cooking.
- Avoid foods that are choking hazards such as candy, popcorn, peanuts or hotdogs.
- Never leave your baby alone in the bath or wadding pools. Remove all water immediately after use.
- Store all medicines and household cleaning products high and out of reach. Place the Poison Control Number in sight 1-800-222-1222.
- Use safety latches on drawers and cabinets.