

My 15 Month Old & Me

Recommendations from your Pediatrician

At 15 month's your child has developed many new skills:

Walking: Most toddlers are walking now although some steadier than others. Most children this age will walk with legs spread apart in order to try and keep their balance. Frequent falls are normal as your child continues to learn to get around on 2 feet.

Feeding himself/herself: Your child will most likely be eating more table food than baby food at this age. He will want to feed himself/herself and may even try using a spoon. This is a good exercise in hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills. Allow him to try to eat independently even if it is quite messy.

Saying 3-5 words: At this age, your child will most likely understand everything that is said to him. He can usually follow a simple one step command. He will start saying more words, around 3-5, other than mama and dada. Encourage his language development by narrating everything you do whether it is cooking at home or buying food at the grocery store. You will also notice he has more mature babbling with inflection.

Gaining Independence: As your child is becoming a toddler he will want to be more independent. This is a very normal part of development. He will want to explore his world on his terms. He will want to open drawers and cabinets. As long as appropriate child safety measures have been made, allow him to be curious.

Ideas for Playtime:

Play Ball-Roll a ball back and forth. Bounce the ball and say "bounce, bounce, bounce". Show him how to kick the ball.

Reading books- Read books daily. Point out objects in books.

Animal Noises- Play with a puzzle with animal sounds. Point to an animal and say corresponding noise for example, cow goes "moo".

Learn body parts- Point to different parts of the body and say name, "nose, eyes". Sing songs like "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes".

Sleeping- Most 15 month olds have dropped the morning nap and will take one 1.5- 2hour nap mid-afternoon around 1pm. Your child should be sleeping 10- 12hours regularly at nighttime. He should have a regimented bedtime routine. The routine should occur around the same time at nighttime. He should be put in his bed and allowed to fall asleep on his own. This will help him return to sleep on his own if he wakes up in the middle of the night.

Mealtime:

- Your child should be eating 3 meals a day with a snack mid-afternoon.
- Give her healthy snacks such as fruits, vegetables, or cheese.
- All toddlers between the ages of 1 and 2 years old should drink 16-24oz per day of whole milk. The extra fat from whole milk is necessary for proper brain development.
- Drinking more than 24oz of milk per day may cause anemia.
- Do not restrict fats in the diet. Do not buy low fat milk or cheese.
- Give a variety of foods. Allow your toddler to try what you are eating. This will let him/her develop taste buds for all kinds of foods and textures.
- Your child should be drinking from a straw cup or sippy cup. Continuing to drink from a bottle will increase the risk of cavities and ear infections.
- Give your child food the size he can eat independently as finger food. Make sure to cut grapes in halves.
- Foods the size of hot dogs or sausages are not appropriate as they present as choking hazards.

Behavior

As your toddler is starting to understand more but not yet have the language to fully express himself, he/she may get upset and frustrated from time to time. These frustrations may lead to temper tantrums. Temper tantrums are completely normal. It is best to ignore him/her during this time as long as she is in a safe place and not able to hurt himself. By ignoring do not look or talk to him/her or about him/her if he/she is close enough to hear. After the tantrum is over make sure to find something that is praiseworthy. She is too young for time-out. If there is behavior you would like to change, redirection works well at this age. For example, if he keeps trying to open a drawer or cabinet, distract her by saying "Let's go read your favorite book".

Media

Your child will develop new skills with interaction more readily than watching TV or on a tablet or smart phone. Current studies are being done to evaluate effects of early screen time on the developing brain.