

15 Month Check Up

Well Child Appointments can be made online at AustinRegionalClinic.com.



Your baby's length, weight, head size, along with health screens and immunizations performed will be in the **After Visit Summary (AVS)** that your baby's provider or nurse will give you at the end of the visit. You can also view this information on MyChartARC.com

Visit Top Five

Here are five points among the information in your handout to which we'd like to draw special attention. When time allows, please read through the whole packet; it has a wealth of great information!

- Aim for **5** total servings of fruits and vegetables daily. It's simple: make ½ your child's plate fruits and veggies and you'll be there.
- **4** house safety tips: keep poisons, medications, laundry plastic pods and electronic cigarettes "up high" and out of reach.
- **3** ways to grow your child's mind: Children learn best from you. Read with your child every day. Remember screen time is not recommended at this age.
- Rear-facing safety seats are the safest for children under **2** years of age.
- **<1** in of standing water: Children can drown in any more than this in a bathtub or bucket. Keep them within your arms' reach around water.

NUTRITION

During the second year most parents notice that their child isn't gaining weight as fast as during the first year of life. Most children only gain 5 to 7 pounds over this second year, which is a contrast to the first year of life when most babies triple their birth weight. Gradually, over the second year of life your child will change from looking like a plump baby with "baby fat" on the arms, legs, and face to a leaner, more muscular toddler. **It is normal for your child's appetite to seem decreased and for you to continue to notice, or even see an increase, in picky eating and food refusals.** Remember the saying "Parents provide and the child decides,"



for how to deal and respond to these normal behaviors.

Do not fall into the pattern of offering only what the child "likes" or offering less nutritious alternative food because your child refuses the healthy foods offered to them. It is normal for your child to like something one day and not the next—this is a normal part of your child's development. **Parents are responsible** for setting routines and structure by deciding **when** the family eats, where the family eats (we recommend eating at the table without any television or other screens to distract), and what the family is offered to eat. **Your child is responsible for deciding how much of the correct portion to eat.** Children are responsible for whether they eat what is offered or wait until the next meal/snack. Most children this age require about 900-1000 calories of food a day. If you've ever counted calories before, you'll know that this isn't a lot of food.

- **When** the family eats: Children thrive on routines. We recommend you set a schedule for **3 meals and 2-3 snacks**, with limited eating in between these times. Grazing throughout the day is not recommended.
- **Where** the family eats: It is important to start healthy habits early. **Sit down at the table for meals with your child.** Having the entire family sit together for meals without the distraction of any television, movie, or other screen time is ideal. This fosters family communication and allows your child to see you model healthy eating. **This is a critical time**



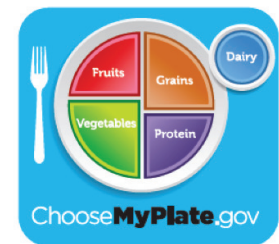
Austin Regional Clinic

Online Access: Day or Night

- View your child's medical records.
- Book your child's next appointment.
- Review your child's AVS (After Visit Summary)

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for parents to evaluate what they are eating. Children's eating habits reflect those of their parents. Parents are the most important role model for children. So, ensure your child is seeing you eat the healthy foods you want them to eat.



- **What** the family is offered to eat: Have all meals and snacks reflect the MyPlate visual diagram. At all meals, **fruits and vegetables should make up half of your child's plate.** It often takes repeated exposure, up to 20 times of offering a vegetable or other healthy foods, before your child will eat it. **Do not force your child to eat their vegetables or reward eating vegetables with dessert.** Just continue to put them on your child's plate at meals and snacks. A serving size is the size of your child's fist, so you do not need to offer a large serving. **Snacks including fruits, vegetables, and protein (for example eggs, cheese, and yogurt) are preferred over a grain-only snack (like crackers, cookies, cereal).** Your child may eat

small amounts at meals, so think of snacks as mini-meals. Remember when grains are offered to your children, try to make ½ the grain offered whole grains (example: brown instead of white rice, whole wheat pasta, and whole wheat bread).



It is important for your child to learn to self-regulate their intake of food, so allow your child to feed themselves. Most food will be eaten with fingers, so ensure foods are cut into small pieces or smashed. Using a spoon should be encouraged, but this is a skill that likely will not be mastered until 18 months.

Sixteen ounces (2 cups) of milk will supply all of your toddler's calcium needs, but eating milk-based products can supply the same nutrition. Excessive milk intake will suppress your child's appetite and can be associated with anemia. **Limit cow's milk intake to 20 ounces, at most.** Your child should be drinking from a cup at this age, not a bottle. Drinking from a bottle causes cavities to your child's teeth.

Whole milk or reduced fat (2%) milk should be offered until your child is two years old. Your doctor will help you decide if a lower fat milk is recommended for your child. At two years of age, children should be switched to 1% or skim milk.

Four ounces of 100% fruit juice is a serving. Juice contains a significant amount of sugar and is not needed in your child's diet (this includes 100% fruit juice). The best choices for beverages for your child at this age are milk and water.

Final Comments: Sweets like candy, sodas (liquid candy), cookies, and cake should be thought of as an occasional treat, not part of your child's daily diet. Fatty foods of little nutritional value, like chips and french fries, should be avoided.

SLEEP

Most fifteen month olds sleep around 11-12 hours overnight and have 1-2 naps for a total of 13-14 hours of sleep in a 24 hour day.

Tips to Prevent Sleep Problems:

- Have a soothing bedtime routine such as bath, tooth brushing, bedtime story, and saying goodnight to family and favorite objects.
- Your baby should be able to fall asleep

without your help. Place your baby in the crib awake but drowsy.

- Make middle of the night contacts brief and boring. If your child stirs and seems to awaken during the night, don't rush in. Wait some minutes to allow them to settle back to sleep.

If you want to read more about sleep problems, we recommend [Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems](#) by Richard Ferber, [Healthy Sleep Habits, Happy Child](#) by Marc Weissbluth, or [Sleep: What Every Parent Needs to Know](#) by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

DEVELOPMENT



Social/Emotional

Most 15 month old children are whirlwinds of activity and curiosity, usually lacking caution or a sense of limits. It is our role as parents to create structure for our toddler so that over time they will learn appropriate behavior and thrive in the family. A structure that helps your child learn to behave has routines and rules that are consistent, predictable, and have follow through.

Consistent routine helps your toddler know that their needs will be met. These include consistent sleep and eating times. Consistent responses to behaviors you don't want are also important.

There are some annoying actions that your child might be doing. To change these behaviors, try distraction or redirection. Distraction means change what your child is doing, eg. "Let's roll the ball together," or "It's bubble time!" Redirection is when you point out a different way of doing the same action, "You can't pick up your baby sister right now, but you can move my bag to the kitchen for me."

Often throughout the day, small problems in behavior also reveal common sense consequences that parents can use. For example, "if you unroll the toilet paper, you have to help me roll it back before you can draw with me." When we respond immediately with those common sense consequences, our toddlers learn to avoid those things that delay their fun times with parents.

Your child will have times of frustration. By 15 months of age, these times of frustration and anger are often about wanting to be able to do things they are not able to do. Ignore the whining, crying or tantrums. Ignoring means taking away your attention and not making eye contact with your child until they have stopped that whining, crying or tantrum. However, you must intervene if your child is not being safe. These safety rules are often some of your first family rules.

For behaviors that are never OK, set up family rules. Family rules should have clear instructions and predictable consequences.

As you are setting up your family rules, try to only start with two to three rules and add new ones after your child has learned those. One rule might be, "No hurting, keep your hands and feet to yourself." There should be an action that follows if that rule is not followed. For example move your child away from the person they were trying to hurt (even if that person is you). You might also choose time-out as the consequence for hurting. During time-out, move your attention away from your child. Place the child in a location that is safe, sometimes a chair or playpen. Time out at this age should be brief, up to a minute. Don't lecture during time out, this is just giving more attention to the unwanted behavior. Use of a kitchen timer with an audible buzzer is a good way for the child to know when the time-out is over.

Cognitive/Learning

Your child is busy learning all day long. Every situation, game, or toy is an opportunity to learn. Toys children tend to enjoy at this age are toys they can bang together, stack or sort. They love moving things into and out of cabinets or boxes. Some children love to build towers of a few blocks and most love to knock them down. However, at this age, most children do not have a long attention span and prefer to "help" with whatever task you are doing.

Make sure to have reading time every day. Your child will likely enjoy picture books and simple rhyming books. Pull your child into the book by noticing things together on the page. As you point out things that are interesting, they will follow your lead and begin pointing to things themselves. Use books in your family routines, such as before naptime and bedtime, as well as during playtime. Use them when you have to wait with your child: at stores or appointments.

Language/Speech

Fifteen month olds use a combination of hand and body movements as well as sounds to let you know what they are thinking. When you match words to the gestures they are using, then it will help develop their language. Most toddlers this age will understand when asked to go to

another room to find something. “Where is your bunny? Is your bunny in the kitchen?” Most toddlers can say four or five words in addition to “Mama” and “Dada.” However, they don’t have clear speech. A word, for this age, is a sound or sounds that are used consistently to mean something. Dropping the end of a word is normal at this age.

Tips to promote communication and language development:

1. **Narrate your child’s gestures:** For example, if she points at a ball on the counter, say, “Sally is pointing at the ball. Do you want the ball?”
2. **Help your child learn the language of feelings** by using words that describe feelings and emotions. “I’m so happy when we go for a walk”.
3. Although there are many television shows, phone or tablet apps, and “educational videos” created for children, **avoid television and other screen time until your child is at least two years old.** Your child learns most from direct interaction with you and other adults. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no television or videos at all for children less than two years of age. The AAP also discourages having a television in a child’s bedroom at any age.

Gross Motor (Movement) Skills

The vast majority of children can walk well by 15 months; however, some children will take another two or three months to begin walking. Falling frequently is common for several months after a child begins to walk. At first your child might trip on small irregularities like carpet wrinkles or an incline into another room, but this should improve with time. By 15 months, your child should be able to stoop and pick up objects, be able to push or pull a toy wagon, step sideways and backward, and even throw a ball while walking.



Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) Programs:

If you believe that your child is delayed or has a condition that could lead to delays, please ask your doctor to refer you.

You may also call **1-800-628-5115** or visit the ECI website at dars.state.tx.us/ecis for the ECI program closest to you.

Dental Care

Make sure to continue to brush twice daily using a toothpaste with fluoride and a soft

small toothbrush. Use a small smear of toothpaste (the size of a grain of rice) to brush the teeth of a child less than 2 years of age. Children are encouraged to see a dentist within 6 months after the eruption of their first tooth.

- Do not share eating utensils or drinks with your baby.
- Make sure that breastfeeding or milk feeding is not the last thing your child does before sleep. Do your teeth cleaning after the last milk feed and then soothe your child into sleep.

Children with Medicaid insurance can find a dentist by searching www.tmhp.com or by calling 877-847-8377 (THSteps Hotline).

SAFETY

Injuries can be prevented. Follow these steps to keep your child safe from the leading cause of death for toddlers. Also, watch more videos on how to protect your child on the YouTube channel SafeKidsAustin and www.safekids.org.

Car Safety

Most injuries and deaths caused by car crashes can be prevented by the use of car seats every time your child is in the car.

- Make sure that your child is riding fastened securely in a car seat every time they ride in a car.
- **Keep your child in a rear-facing car seat until at least 2 years of age** and, even better, until they reach the highest weight or height allowed for your car seat when it’s facing toward the rear.
- Never place your child’s car seat in the front seat. Children less than 13 years of age should sit properly restrained in the back seat.
- Questions about how to install your car seat should be answered by a certified Child Passenger Safety Technician. You can find a Child Safety Technician closest to you by checking the Child Safety Seat Inspection Station Locator: www.seatcheck.org or 866-seatcheck (866-732-8243).

Poisonings

Children continue to explore their world by putting everything in their mouths, even if it doesn’t taste good.

You must use safety caps on all medicines and toxic household products.

- **Be sure and keep all household products and medicines completely out of sight and reach.** Keep all products in their original containers.
- Liquid laundry and dishwasher packets can be deadly to your toddler. Keep them up and out of your child’s reach.

- Liquid nicotine found in e-cigarettes or vapes can be harmful to your child. Just touching liquid nicotine can be poisonous to your baby. E-cigarettes are also dangerous because there are small parts and are easily opened by small hands. Keep them away from your child.

If your child does have contact with a possible poison, call the **Universal Poison Control Number, 1-800-222-1222. Post this number on your refrigerator and add it to the contact list on your cell phones.** If your child is seizing, not breathing, or not responding: call 911.

Choking

Make sure food is always cut into small pieces and that small objects are kept out of your child’s reach. Some of the more worrisome choking risks are coins, balloons, magnets, and button (circle) batteries. Don’t feed your child hard pieces of food. Remember: no chips, popcorn, or nuts until your child can grind them with their back teeth—after four years old. Circular foods can block your baby’s airway and cause choking. Cut grapes and hot dogs into small pieces.



Drowning

At this age children love to play in water.

- **Never leave your child alone** in or near a bath tub, bucket of water, wading or swimming pool even for a moment. Empty all water out of tubs and buckets after each use. Keep bathroom doors shut. Your child can drown in less than 2 inches of water.
- **Always stay within an arm’s length of your child around water.**
- **If you have a swimming pool, be sure that no child can enter without you knowing.** Fence it at all 4 sides with a fence at least 4 feet high, and be sure that the gates are self-closing and self-latching. Most children drown when they wander out of the house and fall into a pool that is not fenced off from the house.
- **Stay alert at public pools.** Assign at least one adult to watch your kids in the water (in addition to the lifeguard).

Lead Poisoning

Children can be exposed to lead by living in older homes (older than 1978) that have lead-based paints or by a family member's jobs or hobbies. Lead in your child's body can lead to long term struggles with school. There is a questionnaire your doctor will give you that can help us decide whether or not your child is at risk.

Falls

As your child learns to walk and then climb, it is important to place gates on the top and bottom of stairways. Install window locks on all windows on the 2nd floor and higher. Also, remove or cushion any sharp edged furniture, just in case your child falls against it. Coffee tables and fireplaces seem to cause the most injuries. Make sure that your baby is strapped in properly at all times when in a stroller, high chair, or any other seats.

Forty children are taken to the emergency room daily in the U.S. with injuries due to a heavy piece of furniture falling on them. Nearly half of these incidents are caused by televisions. To help keep kids safe from furniture and TV tip-overs:

- All dressers, bookcases, entertainment units, TV stands and TVs need to be securely anchored, usually into a wall stud.
- Do not place televisions on top of furniture that is not designed for such use—such as on dressers—as they can tip over more easily.
- Remove items such as toys and remote controls from the top of televisions and furniture. These items may tempt children to climb the furniture or TV, which may cause a tip-over.
- Place electrical cords out of a child's reach, and teach kids not to play with the cords.

Guns

If you have children, it is best to not have a gun in your home. Those who keep a gun in the home should follow these safety rules:

- Always keep the gun unloaded and locked up.
- Lock and store the bullets in a separate place.
- Make sure to hide the keys to the locked boxes.

Burns

There are a number of ways that your child could be burned.

At this age children grab at everything. Never leave cups of hot drinks on tables or counter edges. Never carry hot liquids or food near your child or while holding your child. Do not let your child crawl or walk around stoves, wall or floor heaters or other hot appliances.

Turn pot handles away from the stove's edge so they are out of reach. A safe place for your child while you're cooking, eating, or unable to provide full attention is a playpen, pack-n-play, highchair, or crib.

Because children are just learning to turn knobs, tub and faucet water can be a source of burns. Keep your home's water heater at 120 degrees.

Children are at greatest risk in house fires. Test the batteries on your smoke alarm once a month to be sure that they work. Use long-lasting batteries or change the batteries at least twice a year on dates that you'll remember, like the day that time changes for Daylight Saving and Standard Time. While you're checking your smoke alarm, we also recommend installing a carbon monoxide detector in your home near your bedrooms. Carbon monoxide is particularly dangerous for infants and toddlers. Read more at www.cdc.gov/co/faqs.htm.



SUN EXPOSURE

Avoid the sun during the hours of 10am to 4pm. Sun exposure during childhood can cause skin cancer and premature aging of the skin. If outside, stay in the shade, use a floppy hat to protect your baby's face, and use a sunscreen. The sunscreen should protect against both UVA and UVB rays and have an SPF>30. Make sure to reapply throughout the day. Avoid the spray sunscreens around your child's face.

24-Hr Appointment Scheduling
visit MyChartARC.com or
ARCAppointments.com

Same-Day & After Hours Care
call your ARC clinic and press "1"

24-Hr Phone Nurse
call your ARC clinic and press "4"

A·R·C ACCESS

READING SUGGESTIONS AND RESOURCES

Websites

healthychildren.org

American Academy of Pediatrics parenting website. Now available in Spanish.

healthychildren.org/growinghealthy

Dynamic interactive website to help encourage healthy habits for children 0-5 years of age.

vaccineinformation.org

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Information on vaccines

cdc.gov/vaccines/parents

National Immunization Program

babybuffer.org

Parenting web site email updates for your child's age.

mychildrensteeth.org

For information on caring for your child's teeth, you may visit the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry's website. Also check out www.ilikemyteeth.org for more information on how fluoride protects your child's teeth.

cdc.gov/parents/essentials

Frustrated with discipline? This resource gives great how-to modules on parenting positively.

zerotothree.org/parenting-resources

This is another parenting resource that discusses common parent struggles and solutions.

Make Safe Happen

An app available for iPhone and Android, that gives a room-by-room checklist of how to keep your child safe.

Books

Caring for Your Baby and Young Child, Revised Edition: Birth to Age 5
The American Academy of Pediatrics
Your Baby and Child: From Birth to Age 5
Penelope Leach

Toddler 411: Clear Answers and Smart Advice for Your Toddler

Ari Brown, MD and Denise Fields