



21- to 24-Month Checkup

Date: _____

Weight: _____ lb _____ oz _____ %

Height: _____ in/cm _____ %

Head circumference: _____ %

“It’s exciting to see him learning new words and expressing himself more every day!”

—Kaiser Permanente dad

Your child may be ready to ...

- Try to use switches, knobs, or buttons on a toy.
- Run.
- Kick a ball.
- Say at least 2 words together, like “more milk.”
- Notice when others are hurt or upset.

All children develop at their own pace. If you have concerns about your child’s development, talk with their doctor.

- Avoid foods that may cause choking, such as whole hot dogs, nuts, chunks of meat, whole grapes, or popcorn.
- Give water to drink throughout the day.
- Limit milk to no more than 2 cups (16 ounces) per day. Serve low-fat or nonfat (skim) milk in a cup, not a bottle. Offer ½ cup with meals and snacks. Too much milk is not good for your child. It can cause anemia (low iron in the blood). If you use a nondairy milk, make sure it’s unsweetened and fortified with calcium and vitamin D.
- Don’t give your child soda or other sweet drinks. Juice isn’t recommended.
- Ask us about programs like WIC or CalFresh if you need financial support for food.

- Hug and hold your child often.
- Give clear directions. Praise your child for behaving well. Don’t yell or spank. Instead use time outs, 1 minute for each year of age.
- Give your child time to “warm up” to new people so they feel comfortable. It’s normal for your child to protest being away from you or meeting new people.
- Help your child express their feelings and name them.
- Give your child choices when possible, such as which shirt to wear or which fruit to eat.
- Don’t make fun of your child’s fears or allow others to scare them.

Care for yourself, too

Toddlers need a lot of care and attention. Taking care of yourself helps you be the best parent you can be.

- Try to carve out some time to relax and recharge.
- Call us if you need help coping with strong feelings like anger, sadness, or anxiety.

Think about potty training

Around this age, some children become interested in potty training. For others, it may be another year or more. Waiting until they’re ready will make it a more successful experience.

Reading picture books about toilet training can help introduce the idea.

Eating



Offer a variety of healthy foods with lots of fruits and veggies every day.

- Serve 3 healthy meals and 2 nutritious snacks per day. Offer foods like fruits, veggies, whole grains, lean meats, beans, cheese, and yogurt.
- Let your child decide how much to eat. It’s normal for a child’s appetite to go up and down. Look at what they’re eating over a week, rather than just a day.

Parenting



Connect with your child and stimulate healthy development.

- Help your toddler learn words by talking, playing games, and reading with them.
- Read to your child every day. Your child may love hearing the same story over and over. Let them make the animal sounds, describe pictures in the book, or finish part of the story themselves.

Your child may be ready for toilet training when they:

- Stay dry for 2 hours or longer.
- Know if they're wet or dry.
- Can pull their pants down and up.
- Can tell when they need to go poop.

Consider placing a plastic potty in the bathroom or adding a ring adapter to the toilet seat.

- Never force or pressure your child to sit on the potty.
- Praise or reward your child for any cooperation or success. Don't scold or punish them for accidents.

Some parents try training pants (heavy cloth underwear or diaper "pull-ups"). Others use regular underwear and clean up messes as they occur. It's up to you which approach to try.

Potty training may take 2 weeks to 2 months or more. Staying dry at night usually doesn't occur until ages 3 to 6. Try to be patient as your child learns.

Healthy habits



Help your child thrive as they grow.

- Don't let anyone smoke or vape around your child. Exposure to secondhand smoke increases your child's risk of ear infections, asthma, colds, and pneumonia.
- Take your child for walks and spend time outdoors together. Active play is important for your child's development.

- Limit exposure to phones, tablets, or TV. Too much screen time may harm early brain development. Children learn best from playing with other people—not from videos or apps.
- Protect your child from the flu and other serious diseases. Keep up with all recommended immunizations.
- Keep your child out of direct sun as much as possible. Stay in the shade and cover up. Apply sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 if your child will be outdoors in the sun.
- Brush your child's teeth 2 times per day with a soft toothbrush and a bit of fluoride toothpaste (the size of a grain of rice).
- See the dentist for checkups every 6 months. Need help choosing a low or no cost dentist? Visit smilecalifornia.org for a list of dentists who accept Medi-Cal.

- Reduce lead poisoning risk. Tell us if your child spends time in a house built before 1978.
- Call our 24/7 Appointment and Advice Call Center at 866-454-8855 right away for help if you think your child has been exposed to any dangerous substance.
- Place gates at the top and bottom of stairs, and guards on windows.
- Move furniture away from windows.
- Hold your child's hand in a crowd or near traffic. Children can be unpredictable and move quickly at this age.
- Know where your child is (either with you or held safely away from the car) when backing out of your garage or driveway.
- Don't leave your child alone in the car, even for a minute.
- It's safest not to have a gun in your home. If you must have a gun, store it unloaded in a locked case. Lock up ammunition separately.

Safety



Keep your toddler safe at home and on the road.

- Continue to use a rear-facing car seat in the back seat for every ride. **Keep the seat rear-facing until your child reaches the top height or weight recommended by the manufacturer.**
- Never leave your child alone in the bath or around water, even for a second.
- Lock away anything dangerous, including medications, cleaning supplies, cigarettes, alcohol, vaping liquid, matches, and lighters.

Your next checkup is at 3 years.

- ✓ Call our 24/7 Appointment and Advice Call Center at 866-454-8855 if you have questions or concerns about your child's health.
- ✓ Download our app, **My Doctor Online**, at the App Store or Google Play.
- ✓ Visit kp.org/mydoctor for more resources.