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15 MONTHS

## DEVELOPMENT

Your child will be walking, climbing stairs, stacking blocks, speaking 3-6 words and using utensils. He/she will follow simple commands. Children at this age enjoy looking at books and pictures, playing with their parents, develop a sense of humor, and will give and take toys.

## FEEDING

Your child should be drinking whole milk, limited to 16oz-24oz per day. Transition your child from a bottle to sippy cup, and then to a regular cup. Table foods should be offered. Offer a spoon and fork and encourage your child to learn to feed him/herself. Appetites go up and down, don't worry about how much your child is eating. Think of the big picture – as long as your child is getting a balanced diet over the course of a week, it is okay. Water should be offered between meals if your child is thirsty – continue to limit juice.

## PARENTING CHALLENGES

Beware of negativism! Don't offer your child a choice if there isn't one. If an issue is non-negotiable, instead of saying, "Do you want to go home?", say, "It's time to go home." Try not to use the word "NO" a lot – it will lose its effect. Try to divert your child's attention by offering other toys and activities. Reinforcing positive behavior improves the child's behavior better than punishing negative behavior. Be consistent with your child, and discuss what is acceptable/not acceptable with all care providers so that the child has consistent limitations. Do not reason with your toddler, and ignore tantrums (after assuring that the child is safe).

## SAFETY CONCERNS AT THIS AGE

Inspect toys for small or loose parts (such as beads, eyes, or ribbons). Never leave your child unattended. Use gates at the top and bottom of stairs, and be sure they are securely in place. Safety latches on cupboards protect the child from cleaning supplies and other dangerous substances. Never leave medication within the child's reach. Supervise your child around pets and teach animal safety. Toddlers should never be alone in a car, or bath. Water safety is very important as your child becomes more mobile. Standing water should be eliminated and bath time supervised – no matter how shallow the water. Use sunscreen in the summer and reapply frequently. Do not leave your child alone with a pet.

## SLEEP

At 15 months, a child is typically sleeping through the night, for about 10 hours. One or two day time naps are common, for a total of about two hours. Try to discourage night feedings – your child should be receiving all their nutrition during the day. If your child awakens at night, encourage them to return to sleep in their own crib. Transitional objects, such as blankies or stuffed animals, can help your child to soothe themselves to sleep and feel comforted in their cribs.

## DON'T FORGET TO BRUSH!

Your child should brush their teeth once a day with plain water or a fluoride – free toothpaste! Dental visits are not needed unless there are concerns regarding the teeth. No bottles or sippy cups in bed! This can cause cavities!

## IMMUNIZATIONS

Today's immunizations are Prevnar (pneumococcal), DtaP, Hib, and Polio. As with all vaccinations, discomfort at the injection site or low fever (below 101°) is common side effects. You can treat these with acetaminophen (Tylenol) and cool compresses to the injection site. Please call our office if your child has a high fever, cries inconsolably for longer than 3 hours, or if he/she becomes very pale or limp.

*If you have any questions about this handout please contact our office at 847-676-5394*

