

HEALTHY *and* SAFE at 15 Months

Tips for Keeping Your Child Healthy and Safe

Talking To Your Child

- Show your child how to use words.
 - Use words to talk about your child's feelings.
 - Describe your child's gestures with words.
- Use simple, clear phrases to talk to your child.
- When reading, use simple words to talk about the pictures.

A Good Night's Sleep

- Make the hour before bedtime loving and calm.
- Have a simple bedtime routine that includes reading a book.
- Put your child to bed at the same time every night. Early is better.
- Try to tuck in your child when drowsy but still awake.
- If your child wakes up at night, use words to reassure. Give a blanket or toy to hold for comfort. Try not to give too much positive attention.

Your Child's Feelings

- Try to give choices. Allow your child to choose between 2 good things, such as a banana or an apple, or 2 favorite books.
- Your child may be anxious around new people; this is normal. Be sure to comfort your child.



Preventing Burns

- Keep your child away from pot handles, small appliances, fireplaces, and space heaters.
- Lock away cigarettes, matches, lighters, and alcohol.
- Set your hot water heater temperature to lower than 120°F.

Temper Tantrums and Discipline

- Use distraction to stop tantrums when you can.
- Limit the need to say “No!” by making your home and yard safe for play.
- Praise your child for behaving well.
- Set limits and use discipline to teach and protect your child, not punish.
- Be patient with messy eating and play. Your child is learning.

Home Safety

- Lock away poisons, medications, and lawn and cleaning supplies.
- Call the Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222) if you are worried your child has eaten something harmful.
- Place gates at the top and bottom of stairs. Put guards on windows on the second floor and higher. Keep furniture away from windows.
- Have working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and an escape plan.

Car Safety

- Keep your child’s car safety seat facing backwards until your child is at least 2 years old or reaches the seat’s weight or height limit for backwards-facing use.
- Read the instructions about your car safety seat to check on the weight and height requirements.
- Never put your child’s backwards-facing seat in the front seat of a vehicle. The back seat is the safest place for children to ride.
- Everyone should wear a seat belt in the car.

Healthy Teeth

- Take your child for a first dental visit if you have not done so.
- Brush your child’s teeth twice each day - after breakfast and before bed. Use a soft toothbrush and water.
- Wean from the bottle. If you still use a bottle, give only water.
- Brush your own teeth. Avoid sharing cups and spoons with your child or cleaning a pacifier in your mouth. Sharing can pass germs that cause tooth decay from your mouth to your child.

What to Expect at your Child’s 18 Month Visit:

Your child’s doctor will talk about -

- Your baby’s speech and feelings
- Getting a good night’s sleep
- Keeping your home safe for your baby
- Temper tantrums and discipline
- Caring for your baby’s teeth

To Learn More

- **Poison Control Center** 1-800-222-1222
- **Child Safety Seat Inspection** 1-866-SEATCHECK, 1-866-732-8243 or www.seatcheck.org
- **Immunizations** at aap.org/immunization
- **MaineHealth Learning Resource Center** 1-866-609-5183 or <https://mainehealth.org/healthy-communities/learning-resource-center>
- **Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital** www.bbch.org
- **American Academy of Pediatrics** healthychildren.org
- **2-1-1 Maine** (a directory of local services) 211 or 1-877-463-6207 or 211maine.org
- **MaineHealth** mainehealth.org