

Anticipatory Guidance 9, 12, 15, and 18 months

1. What should you tell parents about feeding and nutrition during these ages?

9 months – Continue formula or breast milk about 6-8 ounces 4 times per day. Begin transition to a cup and more table “finger” foods. Avoid foods that are choking hazards (peanuts, popcorn, tough meat, whole grapes, etc).

12 months – Transition to whole milk and wean from the bottle completely. Table foods in small pieces should replace “baby food.” Be sure to include food from all food groups and avoid junk food. Toddlers will usually eat 2-3 snacks per day.

15 months and 18 months - Do not “force” eating and allow healthy choices when possible. Allow child to try and feed himself - which will be messy! Do not use food as a reward. Try to make family mealtime.

2. What should you tell parents about dental care?

9 months 15 months – brush teeth with children’s toothpaste, do not bottle prop

18 months – in addition schedule dental appointment for around age 2

3. What safety issues should you discuss?

Car Safety

Check car seat for weight limits, many max out at 20 pounds. Car seat should stay rear facing until at least age one and 30 pounds. Never leave a child alone in the car. Once walking, discuss holding on to the toddler near traffic and not allowing them to play in the street

Poisons/Choking/Burns

Get down on your child’s level to look for hazards. Remove all chemicals and poisonous materials from low places or lock the cabinets. Keep plastic balloons, bags, and small toys out of reach. Cover electrical outlets, turn water heater down to 120, and keep hot appliances or other items out of reach. Avoid too much sun and apply sunscreen.

Water Safety

Do NOT leave child in bathtub alone. If there is a pool discuss safety barriers (fence, high door locks/handles) and always have a child supervised around water.

4. What would you discuss about development and discipline?

9 months – Will respond to name, imitate sounds, play peek-a-boo, crawl, may pull to stand and cruise. Has stranger anxiety. A bedtime routine should be established with child put to bed awake. A comfort item (blanket, stuffed animal) may be helpful. Encourage parents to read and talk to their child frequently.

Use distraction for unwanted behaviors and be consistent on limits and rules. Child will learn meaning of “no” at this age. It should be used calmly and firmly with removal of the item or situation.

12 months – Should have a 2-4 single syllable words. Crawls well, cruises, may take a few steps or be walking. Waves “bye-bye.” Stranger anxiety is still present but may lessen. Resistance for things the child may not want to do will grow with occasional tantrums.

Establish a daily routine. Have a limited number of rules and consistently reinforce them. Praise good behavior. Limit TV exposure.

15 months – Toddlers like to imitate others. They become more curious and want to explore. Encourage parents to provide a safe environment for this. Temper tantrums will become more frequent. Allow a safe place for this and then ignore the tantrum. Continue to be consistent with limits and encourage positive behavior.

18 months – Walking should be done well with awkward running. They should have about 15-20 words. Continue to encourage parents to read and talk to their children. A child at this age will enjoy naming things.

Toddlers often say “no” and begin to refuse many things. The top priority is safety. Other techniques will be discussed in future lectures and include – distraction, reinforcing positive behavior, and praising positive behavior.

Most toddlers at this age are not ready for toilet training