

# 3 YEAR VISIT

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

WEIGHT \_\_\_\_\_ PERCENTILE \_\_\_\_\_ HEIGHT \_\_\_\_\_ PERCENTILE \_\_\_\_\_

PHYSICIAN or NURSE PRACTITIONER: \_\_\_\_\_

## *What is normal development at 3 years? By this time most children should:*

- \*be able to name pictures in a book and at least one color.
- \*know their own name.
- \*be able to put on their own shirt.
- \*understand words such as "cold," "tired," and "hungry."
- \*ride a tricycle, jump in place and stand briefly on one foot.
- \*speak well using sentences of 3 or 4 words.
- \*frequently ask "What is that?"



## **Anticipatory Guidance**

### *Diet/Feeding:*

- \*Limit milk and fruit juices as they are loaded with calories. Many children are perfectly happy drinking cool water.
- \*Avoid choking hazards such as nuts, uncut grapes, and hard candy. Supervise children while they eat.
- \*Picky eating and decreased appetite are normal as growth slows. Do not force a child to eat. Your child will determine how much food she needs. Some days she may eat lots, some days little.
- \*Give 3 meals a day, and a small but nutritious mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack if needed.
- \*Share meals as a family whenever possible. Make mealtimes pleasant and encourage conversation.
- \*Turn off the TV during mealtimes, control sweets and avoid junk food.

### *Sleep:*

- \*Maintain your child's bedtime routine. Children this age ought to be in bed by 8:00 pm.
- \*Many three year olds still require an afternoon nap.
- \*Fear of the dark, thunder, lightning, and monsters are quite common at this age.
- \*Stalling techniques such as "I want water" or "I need to go potty" are common at this age.
- \*Nightmares and night terrors may occur. Handouts are available in the clinic.

### *Dental:*

- \*Supervise tooth brushing twice daily, using fluoride toothpaste, and teach your child to spit out the toothpaste when she is done.
- \*If your child has not yet had her first visit with the dentist, now would be a good time. Rehearse before going, so your child knows what to expect (pretend you are the dentist and ask to look at your child's teeth, then have her do the same with you).

### *Parenting:*

- \*Continue established routines. Children are generally more relaxed when meal times and sleeping times are consistent. Bedtime can be a good time to read books to your child.
- \*Frequently praise her for good behavior and for her accomplishments.
- \*Encourage your child to make choices (Would you like to wear the red shirt or the blue shirt?). Never ask open questions (Do you want to take a bath?) unless you are willing to accept the answer.
- \*Keep outings short and simple. 3 year olds have a short attention span. Lengthy activities will cause them to be irritable and tired.

- \*Fatigue and hunger are two of the most common reasons 3 year olds get irritable. Plenty of sleep at night, a daytime nap, and regular meals and snacks are important.
- \*Consistency of discipline is very important - adhering to the limits you set keeps your child safe. Be firm and consistent, but also loving and understanding. Try to verbally separate between your child and the behavior, such as "I love you, but I do not like when you touch the VCR."
- \*Provide alternatives. "No, you cannot play with the telephone, but you can play with these blocks."
- \*Use the two "I's" of discipline - ignore or isolate ("time out") rather than the two "S's" - shouting or spanking. "Time outs" should be about 1 minute for each year old your child is.
- \*Read to and talk with your child frequently.
- \*Show affection in the family. Be a good role model by using seat belts, avoiding tobacco, and showing respect for others. The 3 year old is a great imitator and will learn to treat you, and others, the same way you treat the people around you.
- \*Many 3 year olds are toilet trained during the day but still do not stay dry at night. Others are completely trained. If yours is not, do not despair. Some children take longer than others. If you need help, ask your doctor or nurse practitioner for guidance.
- \*Do not worry if your child becomes curious about body parts. This is normal. It is best to use the correct terms for genitals. Children at this age begin to recognize gender differences and will correctly say "I am a girl" or "I am a boy."

### **Safety:**

- \*Always empty buckets, tubs, or small pools immediately after use. Ensure swimming pools have a four-sided fence with a self-closing/latching gate. Swimming pools are deadly to children this age.
- \*Always walk behind your car before backing out of the driveway.
- \*Falls from kitchen cabinets and down stairs occur frequently at this age. Never leave a chair where your child can use it to climb to a dangerously high place.
- \*Avoid toys that can cut or be ingested. Suffocation by plastic bags or balloons can occur at this age.
- \*Avoid overexposure to the sun. Use a waterproof sunscreen outdoors (at least SPF 15).
- \*By California law, children must be in child car seats or booster seats until they are 6 years old or weigh 60 pounds. Booster seats are recommended until they are 8 years old or weigh 80 pounds.
- \*Safety-proof your house. Keep all poisons and weapons locked up. There is no such thing as a "child proof" cap. Install gates at the top and bottom of stairs, and place safety devices on windows.
- \***California Poison Control Center: 1(800)876-4766.**
- \*Learn first aid and child CPR - know how to save a choking child.
- \*Always supervise your child when playing near a street. A 3 year old does not understand danger and can not be counted on to be aware of outside hazards.
- \*Lock cupboards that contain cleansers, detergents, bleaches, furniture polishes, etc.
- \*Do not leave heavy or hot containers or sharp objects on tables where your child can pull them down.
- \*Continue to keep your child's environment smoke-free.
- \*Teach you child her full name, address, and phone number.

### **Next Well Child Visit:**

When your child is 4-5 years old.



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