

West Plano Pediatrics
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Twelve Month Check-up Advice
Next Visit: Fifteen Months

Diet-- At 12 months, your baby should be eating a good variety of table foods that you prepare for the rest of your family. He will probably need frequent small meals and snacks to keep up with his increased activity at this age. Many 1 yr. olds will not sit still long enough to eat very much at one sitting. Don't worry--when he's hungry, he will eat.

Now that your baby is eating table foods, it is a good idea to reevaluate your family's diet. Make sure that everyone is eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, and grains. Your baby can start drinking whole cow's milk now instead of formula. 16-18 oz of milk a day should be plenty.

Keep cutting his food into small pieces and avoid any foods that he may choke on--peanuts, popcorn, whole hot-dogs, grapes, hard candy, etc. Let your baby feed herself as much as possible. He may try to use a spoon, but probably is not very good at it yet.

Weaning from the Bottle-- We recommend that you wean your baby to a cup in the next few months, if you haven't already. Some babies become attached to the bottle as a security or transitional object and this makes it difficult to wean to a cup. If your baby needs a bottle to fall asleep, he may have problems with baby bottle caries, a serious dental problem. If you give your baby milk (or juice) or breastfeed at bedtime, you must clean his teeth before he goes to sleep.

Don't let your baby walk or crawl around with a bottle. Set limits on the places your baby can eat or drink--for instance, only at the table or in the kitchen. This will keep your baby safe from choking while he walks around and will keep him from drinking so much milk and juice that he doesn't want to eat. Your baby also needs both of his hands to explore his world, and having a bottle in one of them will limit their progress.

Start weaning your baby by replacing one mealtime bottle with milk in a "sippy-cup". As your baby learns to accept the cup at mealtimes, replace more bottles with a cup, saving the bedtime water bottle for last. The bedtime bottle is often the most difficult to give up. If you have an established bedtime routine, it may make it easier. You might try adding a small snack right before brushing his teeth to substitute for the bottle. Don't be surprised if he objects and cries for a few nights, but don't give up!

Calcium— Some babies will refuse to drink milk from a cup initially when weaning from the bottle. Try not to worry too much, but do offer other foods that are high in calcium. Children 1-10 years old require 800-1200 mg per day. A detailed handout may be found on the website. Here are a few food sources of calcium:

Yogurt (1 cup)	415 mg
Milk (1 cup)	300 mg
Calcium fortified Orange Juice (1 cup)	300 mg
Tofu (1/2 cup)	258 mg
Spinach (1/2 cup)	122 mg
White beans (1/2 cup)	113 mg
Broccoli (1/2 cup)	35 mg

Development-- The milestones your baby will be reaching soon will help teach him independence. As he crawls or cruises around the room, he is no longer just an observer, he is an active participant. He will probably get into and explore everything, and he will delight in throwing objects and food to see where they go. As a parent, you should provide a safe environment for him to explore and encourage him as he develops new skills. Give your baby plenty of simple toys to play with. Most 1-yr.-olds enjoy push- or pull-toys, shape sorters, plastic dishes, and books with pictures. You should let him know that there are limits, but don't expect him to remember too many rules at this age.

His language is developing now, too. Most 12-month-olds say Mama or Dada specifically, and may have 1-3 other words. You will notice, however, that your baby is communicating by pointing and gesturing. He may come when he is called or even follow simple commands. You can help your baby's language develop by talking to your baby and by reading simple books for 15-20 minutes each day.

Some babies are learning to walk alone by their first birthday, but don't be surprised if your baby isn't. On average, babies begin to walk by about 15 months, and there is a wide range of normal. The age at which your baby walks is more a reflection of his personality than anything else, but if you are concerned, let us know.

Shoes-- When you buy shoes for your baby, keep in mind that they are really just to protect his feet. A soft, flexible sole will make it easier for him to walk with shoes on. Let him walk barefoot whenever possible.

Safety-- As your baby becomes a toddler, he will enjoy climbing, running, and looking for things that disappear. Be sure that chairs are away from countertops and that the upper cabinets have safety latches. If he can climb out of his crib, move to a bed. Be sure that access to streets and pools are blocked. Medications and cosmetics should not be kept in a purse or drawer that he can get into. Your child will think of more ways to get into trouble than you would ever imagine, so be aware of safety issues at all times.