

THREE YEARS OF AGE

IMMUNIZATIONS:

None if your child is up to date. Let the doctor know if your child is exposed to tuberculosis, or traveled to areas where this infection is common, especially outside the U.S.A.

DIET:

At this age the child appetite will start improving. This age group often suggests things he/she would like to eat. In the family meal setting, the child sometimes dawdles and demands attention. If the child asks for snacks between meals, offer nutritious foods, like dried and fresh fruits, graham crackers, peanut butter on crackers, cheese, bologna, natural cereals, and juice. Child needs 2-3 cups of milk a day. Limit sweets and fatty food. The child will enjoy helping you prepare simple foods like jell-O, puddings, and soup. Don't expect the child to eat with the same manners an adult would.

TEETH:

Thumb or finger sucking which persists to the third year may cause deformity of the jaw. It is difficult to stop this habit. Scolding and punishment will only increase the child anxiety and the habit. Nicely remind your child to take his thumb or finger out, and placing a band-aid on the finger as a reminder might help. Pacifiers are completely unacceptable, and should be thrown away immediately and replaced with a toy. Brush teeth at bedtime, and let the child do it in the morning.

SLEEP:

A three year old child may not a daily afternoon nap. Allow it to be at least a rest period. If not napping afternoons, the child may require more sleep at night. Make sleep time a special close time between you and your child. Talk about the day or tell stories about the child himself/herself or an imaginary 3-year old. If he/she awakens at night, do not permit the child to sleep in your bed, and lead him/her back to bed without talking. Reward the child in the morning for staying in bed all night. Set bedtime ritual and stick to it even in the weekend or during holidays.

TOILET HABITS:

This can be a long and difficult process. Don't embarrass or reprimand your child because accidents will still happen. Bed-wetting is common at this age, especially among boys. Some children don't stay dry until age of five or older. It may recur with upsetting changes.

SPEECH DEVELOPMENT:

Three-year old children have a vocabulary of around 1000 words used in 4-5 word sentences. Repeating sounds or words is normal. Language is very important, as the child learns by talking and listening. Be patient, and let the child try to learn by all his/her meandering talk and questions. Others should easily understand him/her by now. If there are problems in speech discuss it with us

ACTIVITIES:

Three year old child is more agile and coordinated, and needs muscle play activity as in swings, gym sets, tricycles, etc., but will also need quiet activities too like music, reading, coloring, etc. Allow him/her to dress and undress self as much as possible.

SAFETY:

Ongoing teaching required, Repetition required, but still the child can't be expected to follow all instructions. Start to teach the child dangers and rules of traffic. Out of doors this child require constant supervision or a securely fenced area. Potential hazards should be cleaned up, or out of the play area. All chemicals should be out of the child's sight and reach. Guns should be unloaded and locked away. No matches or candles should be within reach. Medicines should be out of sight and reach. Keep restrained in cars, but not left alone. Check batteries in smoke alarms.