Optimum Internal Medicine & Pediatrics
Dr. Christopher Burress
Board certified Internal Medicine and Pediatrics

Caring for your 3-year-old child

Name_____ Weight_____ Height_____ Date_____

Keep Your Child Safe

Use a Car Seat Install it properly in the back seat facing forward.

Prevent Drowning

- Don't leave your toddler alone around water.
- Learn child cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- Empty buckets, tubs and small pools as soon as you are done using them

Prevent Burns

- Protect your toddler from sunburn. Use sunscreen at least SPF 50.
- Keep your toddler away from hot stoves, fireplaces, irons, curling irons, and space heaters.
- Set the water heater thermostat so that the water is not hotter than 120ºF.

Prevent Poisoning

- Lock all poisons (medicines, pest killers, paints, cleaning agents) out of reach and sight of your toddler.
- Tell your health care provider if you have peeling paint in your home.
- Put all Adult Medicines in an appropriate Medicine Cabinet or away where your child cannot access

Prevent Other Injuries

- Teach your child to respect animals and other living things.
- Make sure an adult is always watching your child.
- Make your home child-safe (see our "Child-Proofing Checklist").
- If your child is on a bike with you, make your child wear a helmet.
- Make sure you have smoke detectors on your ceiling. Check twice a year to make sure they work.
- Teach your child about pedestrian safety. Teach your child not to talk to strangers.
- Lock or remove the door of any unused refrigerator, freezer, or ice chest.
- Teach your child your child's name, address, and phone number.
- Make sure playground equipment is not over 3 feet tall and not made of wood
- **Never** shake, toss or hit your toddler. Make sure other caregivers (like day care providers, aunts, uncles) don't either.

Provide Healthy Nutrition

- Feed your toddler at family mealtimes. Give your child 2 to 3 nutritious snacks per day, but don't use them as rewards. Nutritious snacks are low in fat and sugar and high in fiber (like most fruits).
- Let your child feed themselves
- Offer your child nutritious foods but let your child decide how much to eat. You choose the menu; do not let your child dictate it.

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Practice Healthy Parenting and Care-giving

Encourage Healthy Development

- Encourage your toddler socially. Sing together. Encourage your child to explore and play with other children. Look for pre-schools. Limit TV, Tablet, Cell phone, and videos to one hour per day.
- Excite your child's mind. Read stories and rhymes with your child. Help your child use words to express feelings. Go to a library or a museum, but don't go too long.
- Help your child be stronger and more coordinated. Take your child to a park or play ground where your child can run, jump, and climb. Let your child create things with paper, glue,and child's scissors.
- Encourage your child's self-confidence and self-respect. When dressing, eating and playing, offer choices that are okay with you. **Never** yell at your child. Listen to your child and answer your child's questions honestly.
- Teach about sex and private parts. Answer questions about "where babies come from." Use correct words for genitalia (like "penis" and "labia").

Encourage Healthy Behaviors

- Toddlers need structure. Create a schedule for your child's day and try to keep to it. As a family, create a few rules that apply to everyone. Enforce them consistently.
- Your 3-year-old is naturally self-centered. Do not expect your child to share or take turns easily. Praise your child for healthy behavior.
- Help your child learn to calm down or settle. Teach your child that violence (like hitting, biting and kicking others, or breaking things) is not okay.
- Use discipline as a way of teaching and protecting your toddler, not punishing your child. **Avoid screen time** with your child by limiting exposure to Cell Phones, Tablets, or Laptops.

Encourage Self Care

- Your child needs a regular bedtime, and may need a nap each day. Help your child sleep through the night in your child's own bed.
- Help your child brush your child's teeth at least daily. Use toothpaste with fluoride. Take your child to see a dentist.
- Encourage toilet training when your child is ready.

Prevent Sickness—Identify and Treat It Early

- Learn how to find quickly and use the Poison Control Center telephone number. 1-800-222-1222 and add it to your cell phone for emergencies.
- Keep your toddler away from cigarette smoke. Don't smoke when your child is in the car. Don't smoke in the home.
- Call the clinic right away if your toddler is coughing a lot or may be dehydrated. Use acetaminophen or ibuprofen for children to treat fever or minor injuries. A fever is an oral temperature of 100.4°F or higher. A dehydrated child has fewer than five wet diapers a day, is much less active than usual, or has dry lips and a pasty mouth.

Development

All children develop at their own rate. At this age you may notice that your child:

- Balances briefly on one foot
- Pedals a tricycle
- Eats independently
- Knows your child's name, Age and sex
- Unbuttons clothes
- Describes actions in books
- Speaks in sentences and asks questions
- Starts to take turns and share
- Starts to know the difference between boys and girls

Your child's next visit is at about 4 years. Please bring your child's immunization (shot) record with you.