Watch Me Grow – *12 Months*

In this letter you'll find helpful resources and learn about:

- *Your child's next well-child visit.*
- *Vaccines recommended at this age.*
- *Eating well and taking vitamins.*
- *Scheduling your child's first dental checkup.*
- *Creating a family media use plan.*
- *Pregnancy planning.*
- *Preventing injury.*
- *Car seat safety.*
- *How to prevent burns.*
- *Keeping poisons out of reach.*

Happy reading!

Well-Child Visits

Your child is 1!

Your child's next well-child visit is due just after their first birthday. Ask your child's doctor or nurse if you have questions about your child's growth and development. Check with your baby's doctor or nurse to make sure your baby's vaccine records are in the Washington State Immunization Information System (WAIIS).

Vaccines

Vaccines between 12 and 18 months

Childhood vaccines can safely protect your child from 14 different diseases. Vaccines strengthen the immune system by preparing it to defend against viruses and bacteria that cause serious disease. More than 1 dose of a vaccine is often needed for the best protection against specific diseases. Talk with your child's doctor or nurse about which of the following vaccines your child needs to be up to date:

- Hepatitis B
- Diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis (DTaP)
- *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib)
- Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV)
- Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV)
- Flu, every year
- Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)
- Chickenpox (varicella)
- Hepatitis A
- COVID-19

To comfort your child during and after they get vaccines, try these tips:

- Stay calm. Your child can sense when you are anxious. If you don't think you can stay calm, find someone else who can be with your child while they get vaccinated.
- Bring your child's favorite toy or blanket.
- Hold your child on your lap. Talk or sing to them.
- Breast, chest, or bottle feed your child while they get vaccinated.
- Put a cool, clean, wet washcloth over the area where the vaccine was given.

Ask your doctor about medicine for pain or fever. Find more comfort tips at **bit.ly/vax-after-care-tips**.

Comfort me before and after I get vaccinated.

Nutrition and Physical Activity

Your child needs healthy foods every day

To meet growth and energy needs, your child benefits from a variety of foods rich in fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals. Your child also needs iron and calcium. Great examples of these foods are fruits, vegetables, grains, chopped meats, eggs, beans, and tofu.

While your child's stomach is small, they still need 3 meals along with snacks daily.

Milk for 1 year olds

If you're feeding your child human milk, it has the fat, protein, and most vitamins and minerals your child needs for healthy growth and brain development. Follow your child's cues and nurse them as often as they need. Talk to your doctor about a vitamin D supplement and adding other foods to your child's diet that are rich in vitamin D. If your child is formula-fed, it is recommended that you switch them to whole cow's milk at 1 year of age.

Whole cow's milk is a better source of fat than lower-fat milk or non-dairy milks for your growing child. Vitamins, including vitamin D, are added to cow's milk to meet your child's needs. Give your child a total of 4 to 5 servings of whole milk a day. A serving of milk is 4 ounces. More than that can make your child too full to eat other foods. Wait until your child is at least 2 years old to give them non-fat or low-fat milk.

If your child has trouble digesting cow's milk, talk to your doctor or a WIC counselor (Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program) about other foods to give them that have enough calcium, such as lactose-free milk or calcium- and vitamin D-fortified soy milk.

Oral Health

Time for your child's first dental checkup

Your child should see the dentist (or a doctor trained to check children's teeth) by age 1 even if their teeth have not grown in yet. This visit is usually a short and simple exam with your child on your lap. Your dentist will suggest ways to prevent tooth decay.

To find a dentist, call the Help Me Grow Washington Hotline at 1-800-322-2588 or call 211.

Growth and Development

No screen time (TV, video, or computer) until 18 months

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no screen time, other than video-chatting, until at least 18 months. Instead, talk, sing, read, and play with your child to help their brain develop best. Come up with a screen time plan for your family. Consider each child's age, health, personality, and developmental stage. Share your plan with your children's other caregivers to be consistent. Find screen time guidelines at **bit.ly/stguide2**.

Very young children can feel stress

Starting child care or changing child care providers can be hard for your child. They may seem needier or not sleep or eat well. It is normal for children to miss people they have spent time with. Be patient. If you see a change in behavior, try to think about what routines may have changed. Comfort your child and talk about it. Even though your child may not be able to talk back to you, your child will know they can depend on you when things are difficult or scary. For more help, call the Family Help Line at 1-800-932-4673.

Family Support and Routines

Pregnancy planning

Waiting at least 18 months between pregnancies is best for you and your baby. This allows your body to heal and reduces the risk for preterm delivery. Full-term pregnancy is best for a baby's brain, lungs, eyes, ears, and other organs. To find a family planning provider, call the Help Me Grow Washington Hotline at 1-800-322-2588.
Learn how to reduce risks of preterm pregnancy at **bit.ly/MD-IDI**.

Take care of your body

Eat meals and snacks that include a variety of fruits, vegetables, protein, and whole grains. Choose foods rich in calcium, vitamin D, iron, and folic acid. Check with your doctor to ask if you should continue your prenatal vitamin or take a multivitamin. All people who are planning to get pregnant are encouraged to get at least 400 micrograms of folic acid daily to help reduce risk of birth defects.

Safety

Encourage your child to explore safely

Never leave your child in a room alone. Always make sure there are safe places to play when you can't give them your full attention. If the room you are in is not child proofed, put them in a play seat (without wheels) or a playpen for a short period of time. Make sure your home and other caregivers' homes are safe for your child to explore. Lock up or store or breakable things such as:

- household chemicals
- e-cigarette and vaping products
- marijuana products
- medications

Do not expect your child to leave these things alone just because you say "No!" Putting them away is easier and safer.

More ways to keep your home safe for your child

Here are other things you can do to keep your home safe for your child so they can explore safely:

- Keep furniture away from windows so your child cannot climb up and fall out.
- Window screens are not strong enough to hold your child inside. Consider adding window stops for upper-level windows and set them to stop at 4 inches.
- Bolt or strap furniture, such as dressers, flat panel TVs, or TV cabinets, to the wall from the top. Dressers as short as 24 inches have killed children.

Choosing safe toys

When you buy a toy, look at what age child it is meant for. Your child is not old enough for toys with small pieces or sharp edges. Your child may enjoy simpler toys, such as plastic cups in the bath or a large cardboard box.

Keep your child in a car seat

Keep your child in the backseat of your car and buckled into a car seat. A car seat that is used correctly can save your child's life and is required by law.

Your child should sit rear-facing until at least age 2 or until they exceed the weight or height maximum for the car seat. This protects your child's head, neck, and spine from serious injuries.

During cold months, take off your child's heavy clothes before putting them in the car seat. Heavy jackets or coats make it hard to get the car seat straps snug. Snug the harness on your child then cover them with a coat or blanket to keep them warm.

As your child gets more active, they may not want to stay in the car seat. Have soft toys or talk and sing to them in the car. Never leave babies or children in the car without an adult, even for a short time. It is very dangerous.

For more information to keep your family safe in the car or about Washington's child passenger safety laws visit **wacarseats.com**.

Prevent burns (scalds)

Your child can get burned by hot water, drinks, and food. Watch them closely in the kitchen. Here are some tips to prevent burns:

- Keep pots, bowls, and cups away from the edge of the table or counter.
- Use the back burners and always turn pot handles toward the back of the stove.
- Avoid using tablecloths. Children can pull hot things off the table and onto themselves.
- Do not hold hot drinks when carrying your child, when your child is on your lap, or when they are in the stroller.

Environmental Health

Lock up things that can poison your child

Older babies and toddlers are curious. They learn to open containers (even ones that are child resistant) and may eat things that will harm them, such as:

- Cleaning supplies (powders and liquids).
- Iron pills, mouthwash, vitamins, and medicines.
- Nicotine and marijuana products.

Keep these kinds of things on a high shelf in a closet or cupboard with a door that locks. If you think your child has been poisoned, stay calm and call the Washington Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222. If your child is unconscious, convulsing, or having trouble breathing, call 911.

For information on poisons around the home and environmental toxins, visit **wapc.org**.

Lock up anything that can poison me.

Resources

- **Post vaccine care tips:** bit.ly/caretipsvax
- **Nutrition support:** doh.wa.gov/you-and-your-family/wic
- **Find a dentist:** Help Me Grow Washington Hotline at 1-800-322-2588 (711 TTY relay) or 211
- **Family screen time guidelines:** bit.ly/stguide2
- **Family planning questions:** Family Help Line at 1-800-932-4673
- **Car safety information:** wacarseats.com
- **The Washington Poison Center:** 1-800-222-1222 (TTY 711) and wapc.org

Thanks for reading! Share this letter with other caregivers in your child's life. You'll hear from us again before your child is 15 months old with information on:

- Hand washing.
- Helping your child learn about emotions.
- How dangerous batteries and magnets can be to your child.

For the Health of All Our Children

Watch Me Grow is a program of the Washington State Department of Health

@WatchMeGrowWA www.watchmegrowwa.org

Washington State Department of HEALTH

DOH 920-929E April 2023

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