

Well Check: 3 years

Your child may have a lot of opinions and may not want to do what you say. Be sure to focus on the good choices your child makes. Notice and praise what is done well. Give your child lots of attention. Stop and listen carefully when your child wants to talk to you.

Helping your child learn and grow

- **Help your child prepare for reading.**
 - Read to your child every day. Ask your child questions about the story and the pictures.
 - Sing songs and play rhyming games.
 - Practice naming letters and reading signs you see when you're outside.
- **Prepare for preschool.**
 - Consider when and where to begin preschool or Head Start.
 - Help your child imagine. Give your child toys for dress up and make-believe.
 - Give your child chances to play with other children. Help your child learn to take turns while playing.
 - Teach your child acceptable ways to show they're upset, such as talking respectfully or taking time alone.
 - Don't allow your child to hit or bite. Use timeouts.
 - Give your child choices. Let your child choose between 2 good options, such as putting away the crayons or the shoes.
 - Ask your child to tell you about their friends and activities. Put your phone away or other distraction, and look your child in the eye.
- **Help your child learn good sleep habits.**
 - Your child needs 10 to 13 hours of sleep each day (including nap time).



(Milestone) At 3 years old, most children:

- Take turns in games
- Show affection and concern for friends
- Understand the idea of “mine,” “his,” and “hers”
- Talk well enough for strangers to understand
- Play make believe with dolls, animals, and people
- Pedal a tricycle
- Run and climb well

Your child will reach milestones at their own pace. For detailed information about milestones, visit [cdc.gov/actearly](https://www.cdc.gov/actearly), or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.

- **Create daily routines at home.**
 - Set regular times for play, meals, and bed.
 - Have quiet bedtime routines.
 - Ask all members of the family to follow the house rules. Praise good behavior.

Feeding your child

- Put a few healthy options on your child's plate and let them choose what and how much to eat. If your child resists healthy foods, keep offering them. They may change their mind another day.
- Don't buy or offer fast food and junk food. An apple and a glass of milk make a great, quick snack.
- Your child should be feeding on their own.
- Try to eat meals together as a family often.

If you're concerned about your child's weight or eating habits, ask your doctor for advice.

Keeping your child active

- **Limit screen time.**
 - Establish rules to limit media use by creating a media plan for your family at: [healthychildren.org/MediaUse Plan](https://healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan)
 - Do not have a TV or computer in your child's room.
- **Be active.**
 - Except when sleeping, your child should not be inactive for more than an hour at a time. Go outside often. Visit parks, zoos, museums, and libraries together.
 - Make sure your child is active at child care and with sitters.

My follow-up appointment

Your next well-child visit will be when your child is 4 years old.

Date / Time: _____

Here is a helpful resource in the meantime:

- For more age-appropriate safety information, visit safekids.org and sign up for the monthly newsletter.
- For more help teaching life skills, download the Vroom app and receive daily tips. Visit vroom.org to learn more.

Keeping your child safe and well

- **Make sure your child gets recommended immunizations on schedule.**
- **Be safe in and around cars.**
 - Be sure your child's car seat is installed correctly. There should be no more than a finger's width of space between your child's car seat and the harness.
 - Make sure everyone in the car is using seat belts.
 - Never leave your child alone near a driveway, near the street, or in a car. Teach your child not to chase a ball into the street.
- **Promote healthy teeth-cleaning habits.**
 - Brush your child's teeth morning and night with a toothbrush and a pea-sized amount of toothpaste.
 - Take your child to see the dentist every 6 months. Ask about fluoride.
 - Give your child water to drink instead of juice. Juice has a lot of sugar and causes tooth decay.
- **Be safe at home and other places.**
 - Never leave your child alone at home or near water. Teach your child how to swim. Make sure pools have locked fences around them and covers.
 - Make sure your child wears a helmet when riding a bike or scooter or while skating or skiing. Wear your own helmet as a good example.
 - Put a hat and sunscreen on your child before going out in the sun.
 - Lock up medicines, poisons, chemicals, cigarettes, lighters, and alcohol. If there are firearms in any house your child visits, make sure they're locked up.

When should I call?

If you think your child may have eaten poisons, medicines, or cleaning supplies, call Poison Control immediately at 1-800-222-1222.

This is general information that applies to most families. If your doctor tells you something different, follow what your doctor says.

Intermountain Health complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Se proveen servicios de interpretación gratis. Hable con un empleado para solicitarlo. 我們將根據您的需求提供免費的口譯服務。請找尋工作人員協助。

©2013–2023 Intermountain Health. All rights reserved. The content presented here is for your information only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, and it should not be used to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease. Please consult your healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns. More health information is available at intermountainhealthcare.org. FSLW012 - 08/23 (Last reviewed - 08/23) Also available in Spanish.