PEDIATRIC AFFILIATES
OF HAMPTON ROADS

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TIPS FOR PARENTS

3 YEARS OLD

FEEDING

Your child should be able to feed him/herself now and should be eating a well balanced diet. Avoid sweet drinks, cookies, candies and other junk food. Watch your child's fat intake because excessive fat may lead to obesity, high cholesterol levels and eventually heart disease. No-it's not too early to think of that! Continue to sit down for a family meal as often as possible. Continue to give your child 400 IU of Vitamin D (as 1cc per day of POLY VI SOL) or 1 Flintstone Vitamin per day.

SAFETY

If your child weighs 40 lbs. or more or is too tall for the convertible infant/toddler car seat, you may use a booster seat with a safety belt instead of the car seat. The safest seat is a car seat with a 5-point restraint harness. Use this until your child reaches the above height and weight limits. Children like to open car doors so use the safety locks (found on the back doors of 4-door automobiles). Stairs should have gates. Instruct children not to talk to strangers and to avoid stray and unfamiliar dogs. Also teach them how to safely cross the street. Major reasons for deaths at this age are from drowning, burns, falls, guns and poisonings. Watch your children near pools, and while climbing and running. The POISON CONTROL NUMBER **(1-800-222-1222)** should be near the phone. Syrup of Ipecac should NEVER be given.

PLAYTIME

Children may no longer take their daytime nap at this age and they will rely on you to spend time with them. Three-year-old children will play with books, toys, and animals and may give magical or special powers to them. Children ask "why" a lot at this age but they don t always listen for the answer. Your child may stutter or may

have poor conjugation of words at this age even if he/she used correct syntax in the past. Be assured that this is normal. Children may or may not want to share possessions at this age. Praise your child if they share toys freely with friends. If your child does not share, do not chastise them. Instead, calmly explain that "big boys/girls share". Continual reinforcement of this will eventually be rewarded. This age group tends to show an interest in sports. Make sure that you and your child are both active together. Playing with other children teaches them to understand that games have rules and that other children need to take turns. Encourage creative play with crayons, paints, play dough etc. Children love to experience the entire creative process so set aside an area where they can be creative and any messes won't matter. Limit TV, video games and hand-held screen times to no more than 1-2 hours per day. Make sure that you set aside time to read to your child and talk about the story line. Berenstain Bears books are great books to help teach kids a life lesson.

DENTAL CARE

It is now time to schedule an appointment with a pedodontist (kid's dentist) if you haven't done so already. Teeth should be brushed daily by this age. We have a list of pedodontists in the area that would be happy to see your child.

TOILET TRAINING

Not all three-year-old children are toilet-trained. Statistics show that 90% of children are bowel-trained and 85% are dry in the daytime; 60-70% are dry at night. Let us know if you re experiencing any problems.

DISCIPLINE

Children are now able to understand the consequences of unacceptable behavior. Punishment for such behavior should be "commensurate with the crime." Try not to say "no" continually or it will lose its effect. "Time out" usually proves to be effective. See our 2-year-old handout for an explanation of "timeout". Set a timer for three minutes when beginning time out and do not interact with your child while they are in time out. Always remember to discuss the reason for being in time out with your child after the designated time. We have handouts on how to effectively use "time out". If you are unsure of the time out technique, just ask. Consistency is the most important tool in effective discipline. Parents should review their rules on discipline again and share these guidelines with all of the child's caregivers to make sure there is no confusion for your child.

IMMUNIZATIONS/LABORATORY TESTS

If your child is overweight or if there is a strong family history of high cholesterol, we will test your child for increased cholesterol today with a simple blood test in the finger. If the cholesterol level is high we will call you without fail. Should the results be normal we will not call your home. We will obtain blood for hemoglobin (for anemia) today and will also ask for a urine specimen. Any vaccines that your child may be lacking will be updated today. If it is the Influenza season, we will give the "Flu" shot or the intranasal Flumist today. If your child needs pain or fever relief, you may administer Tylenol (160 mg/tsp) 1 tsp every 4 hours or Motrin (100 mg/tsp) 1 tsp every 6-8 hours as needed.

We'll see you back next year for a routine evaluation.

Good Luck!!!

Tips for Parents-3 Years, rev.: 10/30/13