

Your child's enhanced 18-month well-baby visit

Introduction

Eighteen months is a milestone in a child's development and a visit to a family physician or other health care provider at this time is important.

Ontario has recognized the importance of the 18-month well-baby visit by funding a longer, more in-depth visit.

The overall goal of this new initiative is to better support the healthy development and well-being of Ontario's children. What it means for you and your child is that you can have a more detailed discussion about your child with your family physician or other health care provider.

What can I expect at this visit?

When you go for your visit you and your health care provider will discuss your child's development. You will complete a checklist, such as the Nipissing District Developmental Screen™, which provides a snapshot of your child's development and a starting point for your discussion.

Alongside the checklist is information on typical child development, as well as activities to enhance development. If you'd like to look at the checklist in advance, you'll find it at www.ndds.ca. It is a helpful parent tool that is free online to Ontario residents.

The enhanced 18-month well-baby visit is an opportunity for you to discuss your child's development and ask any questions you may have. For example, you may want to talk about your child's motor or communications skills or behaviour concerns.

The visit also allows early identification of any concerns and a referral to specialized community services, if necessary, for your child.

Important 18-month milestones

These milestones mark the progress of young children as they grow and learn.

- Identify pictures in a book. (e.g. "Show me the baby")
- Use a variety of familiar gestures (e.g. such as waving, pushing, giving, reaching up).
- Makes at least four different consonant sounds (e.g. b,n,d,h,g,w).
- Say twenty or more words. (Words do not have to be clear.)
- Pick up and eat finger food.
- Walk up a few stairs or steps holding your hand.
- Show affection towards people, pets or toys.
- Look at you when you are talking or playing together.
- Follow directions using "on" and "under" (e.g. "Put the cup on the table")
- Point to at least three different body parts when asked (e.g. "Where is your nose?")
- Hold a cup to drink.
- Help with dressing by putting out arms and legs.
- Walk alone.
- Squat to pick up a toy and stand back up without falling.
- Push and pull toys or other objects while walking forward.
- Stack three or more blocks.
- Point to show you something.

Useful websites

- Nipissing District Developmental Screen™: www.ndds.ca
- Ministry of Children and Youth Services: www.ontario.ca/child
- Ministry of Health and Long-term Care: www.ontario.ca/health
- Ministry of Health Promotion: www.ontario.ca/mhp
- Ontario Early Years Centres: www.ontario.ca/earlyyears