A year ago, did you wonder if you would ever make it to this day? Well, you have, and have taken a tiny helpless newborn to become a constantly moving and exploring person. Get ready! Your baby is about to enter the toddler stage of child development. Some 1-year-old children are cruising around furniture while others are walking. All 1-year-olds get into everything and become more vocal... and more assertive! Your child’s world is enlarging, bringing new excitement and new challenges to you as a parent.

**PARENTING AND BEHAVIORAL**

- Despite your child’s desire to become independent, you will find the 1-year-old often clinging to a parent more than before. You get a breather, and your son or daughter learns that sometimes you do go away, but you always come back. Continue reading to your child every day, even though he/she may seem more interested in chewing on the books than reading them! The more words your child hears, the quicker his/her language skills will develop.

**DEVELOPMENT**

- Pulls to stand, cruises furniture, or walks alone with an unsteady gait.
- Drinks from a cup—not bottles.
- Waves “bye-bye.”
- Drinks music, rhythms, and rhymes.
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**ILLNESS**

- The 12-month-old child will continue to experience upper respiratory infections (colds) and might even have an occasional ear infection. Children who are in day care will experience more infections than those who are at home with a parent or grandparent.
- Encourage play with age-appropriate toys. Children this age love push and pull toys. Develop motor coordination by clapping and dancing to children’s music. Encourage your toddler to play alone as well as with playmates, siblings and parents.
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**FEEDING**

- Your baby’s appetite is going to take a nose dive in the next six months. Your child has been experiencing very rapid growth for a while — doubling their birth weight at 5-6 months and tripling it at a year. Now the rate of growth is slower than in the first year and their appetite cuts back. Do not misinterpret this normal decrease in eating as a sign of illness or disease. Never, under any circumstances, force a child to eat. Develop a “take it or leave it” attitude and do not get into the habit of substituting, bribing or begging your child to eat. Your child will determine the amount of food he or she needs. Therefore, never overload the plate. If your son or daughter wants more, he or she may have it. One of our problems as adults is over eating, and many of us learned this in childhood.

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- Because your 1-year-old is mobile, whether crawling, cruising, or walking, it is important to begin putting limits on their behavior. They learn by exploration but need safe limits. Praise the desired behavior. It is important to teach the child the word “no.” Saying “no” in a stern voice with good eye contact is almost always effective in this age group. Some parents have a fear of the word “no.” They do not want their child to feel restricted, so they bend the other way and let their youngster run wild without any limits. A child needs guidance for his or her own protection and to learn that others have rights. “No,” at the appropriate time, is as important for the child’s development as is nutrition and love. Discipline should be consistent to be effective. To discipline a one year old, use distraction, loving restraint, removal of the object from the toddler or the toddler from the object.

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SAFETY

• Feed your youngster three meals a day eaten with the family, and a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack.

• If you are formula feeding, you might consider weaning to whole milk and limiting it to no more than 24 ounces or less. It is important to eliminate all bottles by 12 months. After one year, the bottle is more of a comfort item and can cause damage to the teeth. If you are breastfeeding, you may continue nursing as long as desired.

• Avoid foods that can cause choking, such as peanuts, popcorn, hot dogs or sausages, carrot sticks, celery sticks, whole grape or raisins, corn, whole beans, hard candy, large pieces of raw vegetables or fruit, or tough meat.

• Poly-Vi-Sol with iron multivitamin drops is recommended if there is concern about the child's diet.

• Always supervise your child when he or she is eating.

ORAL HEALTH

• Begin brushing your child's teeth with a tiny, pea-size amount of toothpaste. Until your child able to spit, fluoride-free toothpaste should be used. Swallowing fluoridated toothpaste can lead to tooth discoloration.

• To protect the toddler's teeth, do not put him or her to bed with a bottle.

• Fluoridated tap water is the best drinking water for your child. If your family has well water or unfluoridated water, please notify us so that an appropriate fluoride substitute can be prescribed.

IMMUNIZATIONS AND MEDICAL TESTS

• Poly-Vi-Sol with iron multivitamin drops is recommended if there is concern about the child's diet.

• Your toddler may start to give up one of his or her naps, although most 1-year-olds still take two naps.

• Encourage your baby to console himself/herself by putting him/her to bed awake.

• If it is the flu season, we do recommend a flu vaccine.

• Hemoglobin for anemia (heel stick).

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SLEEP

• If there is concern about the child's diet.

• Continue to keep the baby's environment free of tobacco smoke. Keep the home and car nonsmoking zones.

• Avoid overexposure to the sun, and use sunscreen with SPF of 30.

• Never leave heavy objects or containers of hot liquids on high places such as changing tables, beds, sofas or chairs.

• Keep all poisonous substances, medicines, cleaning agents, and paints and paint solvents locked in a safe place out of your baby's sight and reach. Never store poisonous substances in empty jars or soda bottles.

• Place plastic plugs in electrical sockets.

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