

Child's Well Visit, 5 Years: Care Instructions

Your Care Instructions

Your child may like to play with friends more than doing things with you. He or she may like to tell stories and is interested in relationships between people.

Most 5-year-olds know the names of things in the house, such as appliances, and what they are used for. Your child may dress himself or herself without help and probably likes to play make-believe. Your child can now learn his or her address and phone number. He or she is likely to copy shapes like triangles and squares and count on fingers.

Follow-up care is a key part of your child's treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if your child is having problems. It's also a good idea to know your child's test results and keep a list of the medicines your child takes.

How can you care for your child at home?

Eating and a healthy weight

- Encourage healthy eating habits. Most children do well with three meals and two or three snacks a day. Start with small, easy-to-achieve changes, such as offering more fruits and vegetables at meals and snacks. Give him or her nonfat and low-fat dairy foods and whole grains, such as rice, pasta, or whole wheat bread, at every meal.
- Let your child decide how much he or she wants to eat. Give your child foods he or she likes but also give new foods to try. If your child is not hungry at one meal, it is okay for him or her to wait until the next meal or snack to eat.
- Check in with your child's school or day care to make sure that healthy meals and snacks are given.
- Do not eat much fast food. Choose healthy snacks that are low in sugar, fat, and salt instead of candy, chips, and other junk foods.
- Offer water when your child is thirsty. Do not give your child juice drinks more than one time a day.
- Make meals a family time. Have nice conversations at mealtime and turn the TV off.
- Do not use food as a reward or punishment for your child's behavior. Do not make your children "clean their plates."
- Let all your children know that you love them whatever their size. Help your child feel good about himself or herself. Remind your child that people come in different shapes and sizes. Do not tease or nag your child about his or her weight, and do not say your child is skinny, fat, or chubby.
- Limit TV or video time to 1 to 2 hours a day. Research shows that the more TV a child watches, the higher the chance that he or she will be overweight. Do not put a TV in your child's bedroom, and do not use TV and videos as a babysitter.

Healthy habits

- Have your child play actively for at least 30 to 60 minutes every day. Plan family activities, such as trips to the park, walks, bike rides, swimming, and gardening.
- Help your child brush his or her teeth 2 times a day and floss one time a day. Take your child to the dentist 2 times a year.
- Do not let your child watch more than 1 to 2 hours of TV or video a day. Check for TV programs that are good for 5 year olds.
- Put a broad-spectrum sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) on your child before he or she goes outside. Use a broad-brimmed hat to shade his or her ears, nose, and lips.
- Do not smoke or allow others to smoke around your child. Smoking around your child increases the child's risk for ear infections, asthma, colds, and pneumonia. If you need help quitting, talk to your doctor about stop-smoking programs and medicines. These can increase your chances of quitting for good.
- Put your child to bed at a regular time, so he or she gets enough sleep.

Safety

- Use a belt-positioning booster seat in the car if your child weighs more than 40 pounds. Be sure the car's lap and shoulder belt are positioned across the child in the back seat. Know your state's laws for child safety seats.
- Make sure your child wears a helmet that fits properly when he or she rides a bike or scooter.
- Keep cleaning products and medicines in locked cabinets out of your child's reach. Keep the number for Poison Control (1-800-222-1222) near your phone.
- Put locks or guards on all windows above the first floor. Watch your child at all times near play equipment and stairs.
- Watch your child at all times when he or she is near water, including pools, hot tubs, and bathtubs. Knowing how to swim does not make your child safe from drowning.
- Do not let your child play in or near the street. Children younger than age 8 should not cross the street alone.

Immunizations

Flu immunization is recommended once a year for all children ages 6 months and older. Ask your doctor if your child needs any other last doses of vaccines, such as MMR and chickenpox.

Parenting

- Read stories to your child every day. One way children learn to read is by hearing the same story over and over.
- Play games, talk, and sing to your child every day. Give your child love and attention.
- Give your child simple chores to do. Children usually like to help.
- Teach your child your home address, phone number, and how to call 911.
- Teach your child not to let anyone touch his or her private parts.
- Teach your child not to take anything from strangers and not to go with strangers.

- Praise good behavior. Do not yell or spank. Use time-out instead. Be fair with your rules and use them in the same way every time. Your child learns from watching and listening to you.

Getting ready for kindergarten

Most children start kindergarten between 4½ and 6 years old. It can be hard to know when your child is ready for school. Your local elementary school or preschool can help. Most children are ready for kindergarten if they can do these things:

- Your child can keep hands to himself or herself while in line; sit and pay attention for at least 5 minutes; sit quietly while listening to a story; help with clean-up activities, such as putting away toys; use words for frustration rather than acting out; work and play with other children in small groups; do what the teacher asks; get dressed; and use the bathroom without help.
- Your child can stand and hop on one foot; throw and catch balls; hold a pencil correctly; cut with scissors; and copy or trace a line and circle.
- Your child can spell and write his or her first name; do two-step directions, like "do this and then do that"; talk with other children and adults; sing songs with a group; count from 1 to 5; see the difference between two objects, such as one is large and one is small; and understand what "first" and "last" mean.

When should you call for help?

Watch closely for changes in your child's health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You are concerned that your child is not growing or developing normally.
- You are worried about your child's behavior.
- You need more information about how to care for your child, or you have questions or concerns.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/patiented>

Enter **U720** in the search box to learn more about **"Child's Well Visit, 5 Years: Care Instructions."**

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