

Health and Wellness: 5 Years

Development

- Your child is more coordinated and has better balance. He or she can usually get dressed alone (except for tying shoelaces).
- Your child can brush his or her teeth alone. Make sure to check your child's molars. Your child should spit out the toothpaste.
- Your child will push limits you set, but will feel secure within these limits.
- Your child should have had preschool screening with your school district. Your health care provider can help you assess school readiness. Signs your child may be ready for kindergarten include:
 - plays well with other children
 - follows simple directions and rules and waits for his or her turn
 - can be away from home for half a day.
- Read to your child every day at least 15 minutes.
- Limit the time your child watches TV to 1 to 2 hours or less each day. This includes video and computer games. Supervise the TV shows/videos your child watches.
- Encourage writing and drawing. Children at this age can often write their own name and recognize most letters of the alphabet. Provide opportunities for your child to tell simple stories and sing children's songs.

Diet

- Encourage good eating habits. Lead by example! Do not make "special" separate meals for him or her.
- Offer your child nutritious snacks such as fruits, vegetables, healthy cereals, yogurt, pudding, turkey, peanut butter sandwich, fruit smoothie, or cheese. Avoid foods high in sugar or fat. Cut up any food that could cause choking.
- Let your child help plan and make simple meals. He or she can set and clean up the table, pour cereal or make sandwiches. Always supervise any kitchen activity.
- Make mealtime a pleasant time.
- Restrict pop to rare occasions. Limit juice to 4 to 6 ounces a day.

Your child's growth:

Weight: ____ lbs. ____ oz. (____ percent)

Height: ____ in. (____ percent)

Blood pressure: _____ mm Hg

BMI: ____ percent

Sleep

- Children thrive on routine. Continue a routine which includes bathing, teeth brushing and reading. Avoid active play least 30 minutes before settling down.
- Make sure you have enough light for your child to find his or her way to the bathroom at night.

Physical Activity

- Your child needs at least 60 minutes of active playtime most days of the week.
- Physical activity helps build strong bones and muscles, lowers your child's risk of certain diseases (such as diabetes), increases flexibility, and increases self-esteem.
- Choose activities your child enjoys: dance, running, walking, swimming, skating, etc.
- Be sure to watch your child during any activity. Or better yet, join in!

Safety

- Your child needs to be in a car seat or booster seat. Most children will need to ride in a belt-positioning booster seat until they are 4 feet, 9 inches tall (usually between 8 and 12 years old).
- All children ages 13 and younger should ride in the back seat of a vehicle. (Be sure all other adults and children are buckled as well.)
- Make sure your child wears a bicycle helmet any time he or she rides a bike.



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- Make sure your child wears a helmet and pads any time he or she uses in-line skates or roller skates.
- Practice bus and street safety.
- Practice home fire drills and fire safety.
- Supervise your child at playgrounds. Do not let your child play outside alone. Teach your child what to do if a stranger comes up to him or her. Warn your child never to go with a stranger or accept anything from a stranger. Teach your child to say “NO” and tell an adult he or she trusts.
- Enroll your child in swimming lessons, if appropriate. Teach your child water safety. Make sure your child is always supervised and wears a life jacket whenever around a lake or river.
- Teach your child animal safety.
- Have your child practice his or her name, address, phone number. Teach him or her how to dial 911.
- Keep all guns out of your child’s reach. Keep guns and ammunition in different parts of the house.

Self-esteem

- Provide support, attention and enthusiasm for your child’s abilities and achievements.
- Create a schedule of simple chores for your child — cleaning his or her room, helping to set the table, helping to care for a pet, etc. Have a reward system and be flexible but consistent expectations. Do not use food as a reward.

Discipline

- Time outs are still effective discipline. A time out is usually 1 minute for each year of age. If your child needs a time out, set a kitchen timer for 5 minutes. Place your child in a dull place (such as a hallway or corner of a room). Make sure the room is free of any potential dangers. Be sure to look for and praise good behavior shortly after the time out is over.
- Always address the behavior. Do not praise or reprimand with general statements like “You are a good girl” or “You are a naughty boy.” Be specific in your description of the behavior.

- Use logical consequences, whenever possible. Try to discuss which behaviors have consequences and talk to your child.
- Choose your battles.
- Use discipline to teach, not punish. Be fair and consistent with discipline.

Dental Care

- Teach your child how to brush his or her teeth. Use a soft-bristled toothbrush. You do not need to use toothpaste. Have your child brush his or her teeth every day, preferably before bedtime.
- Make regular dental appointments for cleanings and check-ups. (Your child may need fluoride tablets if you have well water.)

Eye Exam

It is recommended that your child have an eye exam with an optometrist or ophthalmologist between the ages of 4 and 6 years old.

Immunizations (Shots) Today

Your child may receive these shots at this time:

- DTaP, IPV (diphtheria, tetanus and acellular pertussis + inactivated poliovirus)
- MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
- VAR (varicella)
- influenza.

Talk with your health care provider for information on giving acetaminophen (Tylenol®) after your child’s immunizations.

Your Child’s Next Well Checkup

The Minnesota Department of Health recommends yearly well child checkups through age 18.

Your child may need a shot for:

- influenza.

Talk with your health care provider for information on giving acetaminophen (Tylenol®) before your child’s next immunizations.