



First Steps

1 Year

Advice to Mom

- Ask your husband to take care of your toddler and enjoy a nice long soaky bath or leisurely manicure this month.
- Find or start a group of moms with toddlers. You will find lots of support and encouragement from sharing with them and your toddlers will enjoy outings with other children.

Key Thought

As your baby takes her first steps, she officially becomes a toddler. If you try to keep your home primarily nice for adults, you will spend a lot of time restraining your toddler and redirection her attention. It is much better to make your home safe and available for her explorations for some time to come.

What Your Toddler is Learning

Physically:

By one year your toddler should have tripled her birth weight. She is able to feed herself finger foods and probably has mastered drinking from a cup. Going from bottle to cup is a transition many babies find difficult at first. With practice she will get more comfortable with the cup. She may start trying to feed herself with a spoon this month. It is a great way to help her learn hand-eye coordination and allow her some independence.

However, since she still doesn't have language to tell you when she is full, she will probably sweep any remaining food and her cup from her tray onto the floor.

Most one year olds sleep about 11 hours at night and nap 2-3 hours during the day. Some begin to resist taking daytime naps. Since they are so active and curious they can easily get overstimulated. It is good to have a regular routine and enforce a quiet time for your baby. Many times, if they just get quiet for a while, they will nod off for a nap they didn't think they needed.

A well-established bedtime routine will give your toddler time to wind down and settle for sleep. When you have a regular routine, have a babysitter or relative put your toddler to bed every so often. This way the routine, not your presence, will become associated with sleep.

One year olds are beginning to make the shift from mostly large muscle development to small muscle development. She is quite accurate in reaching for things that are close by. Since her balance isn't too good if she has to lean very far, she may just grab at things that are at a distance. Anything she gets in her hands she explores thoroughly. She pokes, prods, twists, bangs, pulls, and pries everything to see what will happen.

She is beginning to use her eyes to visualize what will happen when she does something with the object in her hands. When handed a strange object, she may pause and think about it before she grabs it. She is more selective in what she plays with. She uses her eyes to guide her movements more than before.



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Language:

Your one year old probably has about three recognizable words. These may not sound like adult words, but your baby uses them consistently. This consistency shows they are real and meaningful to her. Don't just pick up her mispronunciations, but repeat the correct words so she can begin to fine-tune her hearing and speech. Don't be worried if no one else can understand what she is saying at this point. It takes a long time to learn proper pronunciation.

When she makes a sound that sounds anything like some familiar word, make a game of saying the real word and using it in a sentence. Like when she says, "cuh," you say, "Cat. Here's the cat." Then you might take the word and rhyme it with other real words. Like, "Cat and pat. Pat the cat."

Your toddler is probably responding to simple commands and questions now. She can probably give you things you ask for and point to parts of her body. She can answer by shaking her head or using gestures.

Social:

Your toddler is developing some opinions of her own. You may prevent some meltdowns by giving her choices to make. Ask her if she wants the blue one or the red one, or peas or carrots.

About this age, moms begin to be conscious of a peculiar silence that signals her toddler is intensely fascinated with something. Most often it is something that has been a "no-no." This is the first stage your of developing "eyes in the back of your head," that children come to believe in.

One year olds are learning to read the emotions of others. She will look to you for cues about how to respond in a situation, especially if it is unfamiliar, like a new care giver or unusual, like a balloon that pops. It is her way of figuring out how to respond to her world.

She is now showing emotions such as anger, fear, affection, and jealousy. She is beginning to learn to separate and reconnect with you and other caregivers. Separation anxiety will begin to lessen. She kisses by touching lips or skin or licking.

Ways You Can Help

Games

The strings game: This is the next step in the Fish game you may have played with your 10 month old. Tie a toy on the end of a string and show your toddler how to pull the string to get the toy. When she does this well, begin using a second string. Make the second string the same length and lay it parallel to the first string. Tell her to pull the string and get the toy. She will have to begin to reason which string will pull the toy. Once she has figured this out, reverse their positions. If she tries to pull both strings say, "Pull just one." You vary the difficulty by adjusting the distance between the strings. The closer the strings, the more difficult the game. You can increase the difficulty by curving the strings and finally by crossing them.



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The size game: Your toddler is ready to begin judging size relationships. Use nesting containers. At first use containers that are significantly different in size. Take a smaller container and put it in a bigger one while saying, “The little one goes in the big one.” If she tries to put the bigger one in the littler one say, “The big one doesn’t go in the little one.” When she can do that well, introduce a third container. The more similar the containers, the more difficult the game.

Never play these games silently. Keep describing what you demonstrate and what she does in return. You are teaching her language along with the games. Hearing appropriate words while learning a task increases your toddler’s comprehension and perception. *Growing Child* reported the results of some experiments with two groups of children. Both groups were given the same task. They were to discover the candy in one of two boxes, one red-with the candy and one green-without. The first group were left to try on their own to figure it out by trial and error. It took them a long time to figure it out and they forgot from day to day. The second group had someone say, “red,” every time they found the candy. It only took them 15 tries to make the connection and they remembered which box contained the candy the next week. Saying the word “red” forced the toddlers’ attention and this helped them remember which box had the candy. So, don’t play without talking! Talk in short, simple sentences and talk about whatever your toddler is interested in.

Finger Play Games: You have probably been playing Peek-a-boo and Pat-a-Cake for some time. Try Hickory, Dickory, Dock and add actions to it. Pop Goes the Weasel and help her jump up on the word “pop.” One, Two Buckle my Shoe, lends itself to lots of actions and it teaches the numbers in order.

Toilet Training

Don’t be tempted by books and others’ success stories to toilet train your one year old. Usually when people say they have toilet trained their baby this early, they have really trained themselves. One year olds do not have the sphincter muscle control nor the understanding to be trained themselves. If you put your baby on the potty at the right times it can seem like you have her trained. But beware! Doctors and psychologists are familiar with childhood emotional problems that result from toilet training too soon. Bed wetting that continues long into childhood can be another result.

What to Expect Next

- Will begin to imitate animal sounds
- Bends over to pick up an object
- Rolls a ball back and forth
- Climbing up on furniture to reach things kept up high

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for a wonderful first year with my baby. Please show me other parents with toddlers that I can get to know. I want us to be able to share our joys and our frustrations with each other. Help us to have insights that will help us be better parents to the children you have given us. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Food Allergies and Food Intolerances

Now that your baby is able to feed herself finger foods and drink from a cup, you may need to take special care that she doesn't eat foods that may cause allergies.

Food allergies are not directly inherited, but the tendency to have allergies may be inherited. If either parent has hay fever, pet allergies, or food allergies, their toddlers have a 50% chance of having allergies of some kind. If both parents have allergies, the probability rises to 75%.

Some food allergies may be outgrown. About 85% of children who were allergic to milk, eggs, soy, and wheat as infants outgrow these allergies by the time they start school. However, allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, fish, and shellfish are usually life-long. About 20% of children who had peanut allergies before the age of 2 outgrow this allergy by school age.

Food intolerance differs from food allergies in that it is not an immune system reaction, but a digestive reaction. The most common food intolerance is lactose intolerance. People who are lactose intolerant lack the enzyme necessary to digest the sugar in cow's milk and other dairy products. Symptoms of food intolerance are gas, bloating, or diarrhea every time a certain food is eaten. Since the symptoms are not as life-threatening as with allergies, some children can tolerate small amounts of the offending food with little or no problem.

There are no medications to cure or prevent allergic reactions to food and allergy shots used for hay fever don't work for food allergies. The key to prevention of allergic reactions is strict avoidance of the food. You must become a vigilant label reader and ask about ingredients in food prepared outside your home.

According to Mayo Clinic, to avoid developing food allergies, it is best to hold off introducing the following foods:

Cow's milk may be introduced after one year. Toddlers still need the fat, do not give her low fat milk yet, unless ordered by your doctor.

Egg whites may be introduced after age 2

Shellfish (lobster, shrimp, and crab), tree nuts, and peanuts, including peanut butter may be introduced after age 3. When introducing them, do so gradually and only one at a time.

Symptoms of food allergies vary greatly. The first time a food is introduced antibodies are formed to fight off what is considered by the body as dangerous. With subsequent feedings, the antibodies alert the immune system that there is an invader and histamine is produced. Symptoms appear within minutes to two hours after eating the specific food. Symptoms can vary from eczema to hives, watery eyes and a runny nose, vomiting or diarrhea, to trouble breathing. *Severe allergic reactions can be life-threatening, so contact your health care provider immediately.*

Be sure to tell your doctor even if the reaction was mild. Your doctor will inform you of ways to prevent further reactions and what to do in case of accidental ingestion of these foods in the future. *Be sure all care providers know of any food related allergies or intolerances.*



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Your baby's one year doctor visit

What will happen to your baby:

- Your baby will be weighed and measured to make sure she is growing steadily.
- She will receive immunizations, probably DPT, Hib, polio and MMR. It is time for Varicella, chicken pox, vaccine, if you want her to receive it. Since some babies may have a severe allergic reaction this vaccination you may choose to refuse this vaccine.
- Check your baby's eyesight and hearing.

What your doctor may ask:

- 1. How is your baby eating?** Most 1 year olds have tripled their body weight. If your baby is ahead or behind that marker, your doctor may have suggestions for adjusting what she is eating. Most 1 year olds can finger feed themselves and drink from a cup.
- 2. How is your baby sleeping?** Most 1 year olds are sleeping about 11 hours at night and about 3 hours during the day. If your baby is waking up often at night, be sure to have detailed information about how and when she sleeps. With this information your doctor can give you some helpful suggestions.
- 3. How many teeth does your baby have?** Most 1 year olds have at least 2-3 teeth. Your doctor can suggest ways to help with teething pain, if necessary.
- 4. Is your baby pulling herself up? Is she standing? Is she walking?** Your baby is probably cruising by now and may have taken her first steps. If your baby cannot bear her own weight on her legs or if she is not crawling or creeping, let your doctor know.
- 5. What does your baby say?** Most 1 year olds can say "mama," "dada," and maybe a couple other words. She should be joining syllables together and sounding like she is talking a foreign language. If your baby is not responding to her own name and other familiar words and shows no interest in conversations, tell your doctor. If she is not making any sounds or is making fewer than we was before, tell your doctor this also.
- 6. Does your baby point to objects?** Most 1 year olds point at things that interest them as a non-verbal way of communicating with you. This is an important step in language development. If she is not using both hands equally, tell your doctor.
- 7. How are your baby's social skills?** Most 1 year olds like playing games like peek-a-boo and patty-cake. They imitate everyday actions and are curious and happy most of the time. She may be shy with people she doesn't know.
- 8. How is your baby's vision?** If one or both of your baby's eyes are crossed or don't track properly, ask your doctor to check this.
- 9. How is your baby's hearing?** If your baby doesn't turn toward sounds, be sure and tell your doctor. The sooner hearing problems are discovered and treated, the better outcome for the child's speech and learning.

My Questions for the doctor:

- 1.
- 2.