



West Virginia HealthCheck

18 Month Visit

What to Expect at the 18 Month Visit

Your 18 month old is rapidly learning to communicate. He is following simple commands and may speak up to 6 words. During this visit some questions your provider may ask include:

How does your toddler communicate what she wants?

What do you think your toddler understands?

Do you think your toddler hears all right?

- Your toddler's length and weight along with **head circumference** will be measured.
- Your toddler will have a complete head-to-toe physical examination.
- Your provider will ask questions about **tuberculosis** and **lead risk**.
- Your provider will use a **standardized developmental screening tool** to evaluate your child's overall development.
- Your provider will use an autism-specific screening tool to screen for autism.
- Your provider will follow-up on lab tests and immunizations from earlier visits.
- Throughout the visit, you will have opportunities to talk with the provider about questions and concerns you may have about your toddler. In addition, your provider will give you information on discipline, safety, and early oral health care.

Preventive Care Tips: Autism Screening

Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are a group of developmental disabilities that can cause significant social, communication and behavioral challenges. People with ASDs handle information in their brain differently than other people.

ASDs are "spectrum disorders." That means ASDs affect each person in different ways, and can range from very mild to severe. People with ASDs share some similar symptoms, such as problems with social interaction. But there are differences in when the symptoms start, how severe they are, and the exact nature of the symptoms.

Diagnosing autism can be difficult since there is no medical test to diagnose the disorders. Medical providers look at the child's behavior and development to make a diagnosis.

Autism can sometimes be detected at 18 months or younger. However, many children do not receive a final diagnosis until much older.

Diagnosing autism begins with two steps:

Developmental screening is a short test to tell if children are learning basic skills when they should, or if they might have delays. During developmental screening the provider might ask the parent some questions or talk and play with the child during an exam to see how she learns, speaks, behaves, and moves. A delay in any of these areas could be a sign of a problem.

All children should be screened for developmental delays and disabilities during regular well-child visits at 9, 18 and 30 months. Additional screening might be needed if a child is at high risk for developmental problems due to preterm birth, low birth weight or other reasons.

In addition, all children should be **screened specifically for autism** during regular well-child visits at 18 months and 24 months. Additional screening might be needed if a child is at high risk for ASDs (e.g., having a sister, brother or other family member with an ASD) or if behaviors sometimes associated with ASDs are present.

If your child's medical provider does not routinely check your child with these types of developmental screening tools, ask that it be done. If the provider sees any signs of a problem, a **comprehensive diagnostic evaluation** is needed.

If you're worried about your toddler's development between regular well-child visits, don't wait until the next one. Call your provider and explain your concern. He may be able to calm your fears quickly, or may want to schedule an appointment for a developmental or autism screening right away.

What To Expect At The 24 Month Visit

- **Body Mass Index (BMI)** will be calculated.
- Your provider will use an autism-specific screening tool to screen for autism.
- Your toddler will have a lab test to check for lead exposure.
- Your toddler will have a **dyslipidemia risk screen**.

**West Virginia
HealthCheck Program
1-800-642-9704**

www.dhhr.wv.gov/healthcheck

**Transportation Assistance
Contact MTM to schedule a ride
1-844-549-8353**

www.mtm-inc.net/west-virginia