

Development

At 18 months of age, your child should be able to:

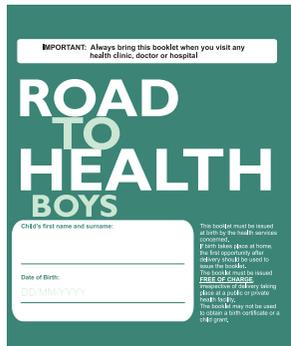
- Walk well and throw/kick a ball
- Speak 5 – 10 words
- Understand simple commands
- Uses fingers to eat

At this age, a child may start to have tantrums. This is normal. Be patient and praise good behaviour.



Next Clinic Visit

You will need to return to your clinic every 2 months to check your child's growth. At the 2 year visit, your child will also receive vitamin A and deworming medicine to help your child grow bigger and be healthy.



Danger Signs

You should return to the clinic **immediately** if your child has any of these problems:

- Refuses to eat
- Unable to breathe well or fast breathing
- Is vomiting everything he/she eats
- Diarrhoea with sunken eyes or
- Diarrhoea with blood
- Lethargic or unconscious
- Convulsions/fits
- If anyone in close contact with your child has TB



Caring for your Child

18 Months



Disclaimer:

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Immunisations, Vitamin A and Deworming

At the 18 month clinic visit your child will receive 2 immunisations, vitamin A drops and medicine for worms.

The immunisations will protect your child from getting measles, whooping cough, tetanus, polio, meningitis and infections in the ear and throat. Vitamin A will help your child to grow and protect against diseases like measles and diarrhoea.

Your child may develop fever or pain where the injections were given – this is normal.

All babies need vitamin A and medicine for worms every 6 months until age 5



Photo courtesy USAID

Return to your clinic immediately if:

- The fever does not settle
- The child cries without stopping for more than 3 hours
- The area where the vaccine was given becomes swollen, or
- The child has any convulsions/fits

HIV Status of Mother and Child

If child is HIV-positive:

- Your child needs antiretroviral treatment (ART) to prevent him/her from getting sick
- Make sure that your child attends the ART clinic every month for a check-up and to collect medication
- Continue to give your child the antibiotic Cotrimoxazole/Bactrim daily

If child's mother is HIV-positive and child tested HIV-negative at 6 weeks:

- At this clinic visit, your child will have an HIV test. This test is called a rapid test and is the same HIV test used in adults. The results of the test will be given to you during the visit
- If your child tests HIV-positive, he/she will need to start ART as soon as possible (within 2 weeks)
- If your child tests negative and it has been more than 6 weeks since you have breastfed, your child does not have HIV
- You need to discuss your ART for your own health with the nurse at this visit



If child's mother is HIV-negative:

- It is still important for your child to have an HIV test at 18 months of age to ensure that he/she is HIV-negative

Feeding

Children at this age need 4 – 5 small meals every day and lots of clean water. If you are HIV-negative, you can continue to breastfeed. You should also:

- Make sure your child drinks 2 – 3 cups of full cream cow's milk every day
- Feed your child vegetables and fruit, especially dark leafy greens and orange/yellow fruits
- Allow your child to feed himself/herself
- Limit the amount of sweets you give your child



Your child should be gaining weight every month. Ask the nurse at the clinic to show you how your child is growing on the growth chart in your child's Road to Health Booklet. If your child is not gaining weight every month, speak to your nurse.