



Four Year Preventive Exam

Immunizations

DTaP–Polio Vaccine, MMR–V (Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella).

Behavior

Four is an age of independence. Kids want to do things on their own, without help from Mommy or Daddy. Try to make your child’s surroundings as safe as possible. Let him explore as much as possible, but set limits. Be sure his world is safe. Watch him without distraction near streets or water. Teach him to avoid strangers and especially not to accept food from them. Advise him to be careful around a strange dog, especially when the dog is eating. Teach him what to do in case of fire in the home. If he is over 40 pounds, he can switch from a car seat to a belt positioning booster seat, which raises him up so that the lap and shoulder belts fit properly. Provide a good example by always wearing your seat belt, too. Keep all firearms safely locked up.

This is a normal age for your child to be interested in her own as well as a playmate’s body. She may be curious about where babies come from and about the differences between boys and girls. Use correct terms for genitals and realize that your child’s sexual curiosity and explorations are normal. Try to answer questions honestly, in as natural a way as possible, and at her level of understanding. Stay within the boundaries of each question. Usually, children are not ready to hear more than they are asking.

Avoid exposure to television, videos, and computer games for more than 1 hour per day. Be aware of the content of any media your child chooses to watch.

Most 4–year–olds are toilet–trained, at least during the daytime, but about 25% are not dry at night yet. With time and positive support, your child should accomplish this skill.

Development

Your child should now be developing the coordination to alternate feet descending stairs, hop, jump, stand on one foot for 3 to 5 seconds, climb a ladder, ride a tricycle, walk on tip–toes, hold a pencil with good control, build a tower of 10 blocks, play with puzzles, and cut and paste. He should wash and dry his hands and brush his teeth. He should be able to dress himself, including using zippers and buttons. He should enjoy the companionship of other children, play cooperatively, and copy figures such as a cross, a circle, and possibly a square. Attending preschool helps him develop friendships and makes the transition to kindergarten easier.

Click here for our [Medication Dosing Guide](#) to see recommended dosing of acetaminophen and ibuprofen.