

# The Butterfly Health & Wellness Bulletin



May 2024 "Mother's Day" Issue



## The Butterfly Brief

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## Welcome to May!

Hello families! Yes, April showers bring May

flowers  but aachoo...it also brings allergies! May is National Asthma and Allergy month, and for those of us affected its also the season of itchy

eyes , hay fever (rhinitis) or "stuffy" nose , inhalers oh the list goes on and on! This month is also when we celebrate Mother's Day, so we are designing this issue for our moms and the joy they bring into our lives!

"Milestones Matter" with Ms. P features another milestone you don't want to miss!

Happy Mother's Day,

Agape Health & Wellness Team

# Prevention of Allergies and Asthma in Children (source: [www.aaaai.org](http://www.aaaai.org))



It has long been known that allergies and asthma tend to run in families, making children where one or both parents have an allergic disease more likely to develop these conditions. Fortunately, there are steps that may delay or possibly prevent [allergies](#) or [asthma](#) from developing.

## **Preventing Food Allergies**

[Food allergies](#) can cause problems ranging from eczema to life-threatening allergic reactions. Common triggers include peanuts, tree nuts, cow's milk, egg, soy, wheat, sesame, fish, and shellfish.

Infants with a sibling or at least one biological parent who has allergic conditions are at risk for developing food allergy, especially if they already exhibit allergic symptoms of atopic dermatitis, allergic rhinitis or asthma.

Restricting a mother's diet of specific allergens during pregnancy and while

breast-feeding, when a child is otherwise well, is not routinely recommended as a means to prevent food allergies. Most recent information indicates there is no significant allergy prevention benefit to your baby if you avoid highly allergenic foods during this time. Breast milk is the ideal way to nourish your infant. It is least likely to trigger an allergic reaction, it is easy to digest, and it strengthens the infant's immune system. Especially recommended for the first four to six months, it may possibly reduce early eczema, wheezing and cow's milk allergy. For infants at risk for food allergy where the mother is unable to breast feed, hydrolyzed infant formulas are recommended as hypoallergenic substitutes over cow's milk and soy formulas.

Between four to six months, single-ingredient infant foods may be introduced, typically including fruits (apples, pears, and bananas), vegetables (green vegetables, sweet potatoes, squash and carrots) and cereal grains (rice or oat cereal) one at a time. Food can be introduced this way every 3 to 5 days as appropriate for the infant's developmental readiness. This slow process gives parents or caregivers a chance to identify and eliminate any food that causes an allergic reaction.

Egg, dairy, peanut, tree nuts, fish and shellfish can be gradually introduced (in appropriate forms) during the same four-to-six-month window after less allergenic foods have been tolerated. In fact, delaying the introduction of these foods may increase your baby's risk of developing allergies.

An allergist should be consulted if allergic reactions, like moderate to severe eczema, occur or if the infant has a peanut allergic sibling.

## **Preventing Environmental Allergies and Asthma**

### **Dust Mites**

Since some airborne substances may trigger allergy or asthma symptoms, reducing contact with these substances early in life may delay or prevent allergy or asthma symptoms. Research for this is clearest with dust mites. If your child is at high risk of developing allergies, there are steps you can take to control dust mites.

Use zippered, "allergen-impermeable" covers on pillows and mattresses and wash bedding in hot water weekly. Indoor humidity should be kept below 50%. If possible, carpets and upholstered furniture should be removed from your infant's bedroom.

### **Pets and Other Animals**

The relationship between early life exposure to animals and the development of allergies and asthma is somewhat confusing and there are many factors to consider. Previous evidence suggested that children exposed to animals early in life are more likely to develop allergies and asthma. More recent research seems to show that early exposure to animals (cats and dogs in particular) may actually protect children from developing these diseases. Newer research also suggests children raised on farms develop fewer allergies and asthma. Talk with your physician to determine what is best for you and your family.

### **Tobacco Smoke**

It is very important not to expose your children to tobacco smoke before or after birth. Smoking during pregnancy increases the chance of your child wheezing during infancy. Exposing children to secondhand smoke has also

been shown to increase the development of asthma and other chronic respiratory illnesses.

### **Benefits of Breast-Feeding**

Infections that start in the lungs are common triggers of asthma. Since breast-feeding for at least four to six months strengthens a child's immune system, it is helpful in avoiding these infections and, in the long term, asthma.

### **Seeking Help**

If you believe your child may have allergies or asthma, it is important to seek the right medical help. An allergist / immunologist, often referred to as an allergist, is a specialist in the diagnosis and treatment of allergies, asthma and other diseases of the immune system. Allergists have completed medical school, at least three years of residency in pediatrics or internal medicine, then at least two years of specialized training in allergy and immunology.

Testing done by an allergist is generally safe and effective for children of all ages. Allergy tests, combined with the knowledge of your allergy specialist to interpret them, can give precise information about what your child is and is not allergic to.

For instance, if your child wheezes when you are at home and you don't know why, you don't have to get rid of your cat if your child's allergy testing shows that he or she is allergic to dust mites but not cats. With this information, you and your allergist can develop a treatment plan to manage or even get rid of your child's symptoms.

### **When to Proceed with Caution**

There are methods of allergy testing that the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI) believes are not useful or effective. These include: massive allergy screening tests done in supermarkets or drug stores, applied kinesiology (allergy testing through muscle relaxation), cytotoxicity testing, skin titration (Rinkel method), provocative and neutralization (subcutaneous) testing or sublingual provocation.

### **Healthy Tips**

- Breast-feeding exclusively for the first four to six months, or using a hypoallergenic formula, may strengthen the immune system while delaying or preventing atopic dermatitis and milk allergy.
- Restricting a mother's diet during pregnancy or while breast-feeding has not been shown to help prevent the development of allergies.
- Solid foods should be introduced gradually between four to six months of age. Egg, dairy, peanut, tree nuts, sesame, fish and shellfish can be gradually introduced after less allergenic foods have been tolerated. In fact, delaying the introduction of these foods may increase your baby's risk of developing allergies.
- Reducing exposure to some allergens, such as dust mites, may delay or prevent allergy or asthma symptoms.
- Exposure to tobacco smoke before and after birth increases your infant's risk of developing wheezing and asthma.

# Milestones Matter w/ Ms. P 🖋️



Dear Parent:

“Mommy, I do it myself!” “Daddy I’m thfree!” Does, this sound familiar? Welcome to the land of three-year-olds! But first, congratulations, you made it through an entire year of “Toddler Two’s” and now you are a proud parent of a “Three-nager”.

Its potties, pouts, and pitchy screams until your three-year-old adds more words to her vocabulary. Oh, and do not be surprised if they struggle with their pronunciations.

Not only is your 3-year-old growing in height and weight, he is also fine tuning gross and fine motor skills. As your 3-year-old grows, she is learning more about her own body and how to control it. Balancing is improving and with practice, your “Three-nager” will achieve more than ever before.

Keep in mind that every baby develops at her own pace. Please always consult with your pediatrician and your baby’s teacher to monitor milestone progression.

Grow with Love,

Ms. P 🖋️

# 3-Year Old Milestones

## **Cognitive Development**

Cognitive development in a 3-year-old isn't just about learning the alphabet or how to count. It envelops the entire learning process of absorbing information, which includes asking questions, and processing and understanding information.

Most 3-year-olds are like sponges, and they absorb everything around them. As a parent, help them know what to do with that information. Because they are now able to sit still and focus for a longer period, they can take in even more around them.

Your child's mind and imagination will blossom this year. As they develop their memory and start to understand more about the world around them, you should expect lots of questions. You might find there are times when you don't know how to answer. Try to be patient with your child's constant questions because it's their way of learning more about the world.

It can be a challenge to know what your child does understand and what still needs to be learned, but these are some of the milestones you look for them to achieve by the end of the year.

## **Speech & Language**

Your little one should now have about 300 words in their verbal arsenal, and it is likely they understand much more than that. Not only should your child be speaking in simple sentences, but their comprehension is also booming and getting stronger every day.

### **Physical Development Key Milestones**

- **Gross motor skills:** Most 3-year-olds can walk a line, balance on a low balance beam, skip or gallop, and walk backward. They can usually pedal a tricycle, catch a large ball, and jump with two feet.
- **Fine motor skills:** By age 3, kids can usually wash and dry their hands, dress themselves with a little assistance, and turn pages in a book. Most preschoolers can hold a writing instrument with their fingers, not their fists.
- **Major highlights:** Many 3-year-olds are also ready to be potty-trained.

### **Emotional Development Key Milestones**

- Learns to share and take turns but may not always like it.
- Starts to understand emotions, both their own and others. Your child may use simple expressions such as "I'm mad!", "I'm sad," or "I'm happy!" to let you know how they feel



## **Social Development Key Milestones**

- Begins to show empathy when another person is hurt or upset and may even attempt to comfort the person.
- May start to tattletale if they feel they've been "wronged" by another child or sibling.
- Shows affection for others on their own (without you suggesting they give a friend a hug).

## **Play Key Milestones**

- Enjoys listening to books and may even attempt to "read" them on their own.
- Identifies basic shapes and colors.
- Says the alphabet.



# Coloring Activity Page

