



Watch Me
Grow™

Children's health



We are excited to guide you through our Watch Me GrowSM program. Our program shares ways to keep your child healthy as they develop and grow into adulthood.

We have crafted this booklet just for you. You will learn about topics like dental care, signs of childhood/teen depression, and your evolving role as a parent. We are committed to providing you with resources to help you support, encourage, and guide your child as they grow.

We thank you for choosing Sentara Health Plans as your trusted partner for your child's wellness. For more information about Watch Me Grow, please call **1-844-671-2108 (TTY: 711)**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or email us at **welcomingbaby@sentara.com**.

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Watch Me Grow

Watch Me Grow is our preventive screening, diagnostic, and treatment program for children, adolescents, teens, and young adults. This program provides you with ways to keep your child healthy as they grow. All children and teens need well-visits and immunizations (shots) at certain ages, even if they're not sick. We'll send you reminders when your child needs theirs. You may get alerts by mail, phone, text message, or email.

Support and outreach

Meet your child's team who will continue to support you during this time.

Welcoming Baby certified community health workers contact you throughout 12 months postpartum. Your community health worker can explain services you can get from Sentara Health Plans, such as breastfeeding resources and incentives. They will also remind you to attend recommended doctor visits.

Care managers are licensed professionals, or a professional with a background in healthcare, who provide education and coordination of care for our members who need or want assistance and support for improved health outcomes and access to care.

Health educators help you enroll in classes, where available. Your health educator also helps with quitting smoking and maintaining healthy exercise and eating habits.

Pediatricians (baby's doctor) are specially trained doctors who treat babies, infants, adolescents, and teenagers.

Primary care doctors are doctors you consult for all of your basic medical needs, including routine checkups, physicals, and screenings.

FREE 24/7 Nurse Advice Line for times your doctor is not available and you're not sure what to do. Call **1-833-933-0487 (TTY: 711)**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This call is free.

Child and adolescent well-visits and immunizations

What are well-visits?

As a member, your child gets free well-visits. Well-visits are doctor visits that check your child's development and can help detect and prevent health problems. Your child will have physical, vision, hearing, and dental exams. The visit is a good way to get all of your child's needed shots. The doctor may also talk with you about topics such as:

- What to expect as your child grows
- Childhood diseases
- Healthy habits
- Healthy eating
- Sleep
- Exercise
- Safety
- Home life
- School performance
- Peer pressure
- Depression
- Smoking
- Drugs and alcohol
- Sexual behavior

Learn more about developmental screenings and well-child visit recommendations at aap.org/periodicityschedule.

Transportation

If you need transportation to a doctor visit, pharmacy, or other medically related appointment, call at least five business days in advance. Call **1-877-892-3986 (TTY: 711)**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.



What to expect during a well-child visit?

At your child's well-child visit, the doctor may do a screening to check how your child is growing and developing. The screening looks at your child's milestones at different ages, including fine and gross motor skills (such as bouncing, rocking, pulling, crawling, or sitting up), and language and cognitive development (such as babbling, saying "no" and "bye-bye", clapping hands, playing peek-a-boo). These doctor-led screenings often happen when your child is 9, 18, and 30 months old and are helpful to identify if any additional support or services that may be needed to help your child as they grow. You may ask your child's doctor if they use any of the following screenings:

- Ages and Stages Questionnaire - 3rd Ed. (ASQ-3): Checks your child's skills
- Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status (PEDS): Asks parents about concerns
- Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status - Developmental Milestones (PEDS-DM): Checks age-based milestones
- Survey of Well-Being in Young Children (SWYC): Checks development and behavior

Well-visits are recommended at the following ages:

- 1 month
- 2 months
- 4 months
- 6 months
- 9 months
- 12 months
- 15 months
- 18 months
- 24 months
- Every year from age 3 to 21





Recommended child and adolescent immunization schedule for ages 18 or younger, United States, 2025.

Talk with your child's doctor if you have questions about any shot recommended for your child.

Vaccine	Birth	1 mo	2 mos	4 mos	6 mos	12 mos	15 mos	18 mos	19-23 mos	2-3 years	4-6 years
Hepatitis B (HepB)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			
Rotavirus (RV)			X	X	X						
Diphtheria, pertussis, & tetanus (DTaP)			X	X	X		X	X			X
Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)			X	X	X	X	X	X			
Pneumococcal disease (RPCV13, PCV15)			X	X	X	X	X				
Polio (IPV)			X	X	X	X	X	X			
COVID-19**					X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Influenza (flu)					X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)						X	X				X
Varicella (VAR, chickenpox)						X	X				X
Hepatitis A (HepA)						X	X	X	X		

Recommended child and adolescent immunization schedule for ages 18 or younger, United States, 2025



Vaccine	7 yrs	8 yrs	9 yrs	10 yrs	11 yrs	12 yrs	13 yrs	15 yrs	16 yrs	17 yrs	18 yrs
COVID-19**	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Influenza (flu)	X*	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap)					X	X					X
Human papillomavirus (HPV)					X	X					
Meningococcal (MenACWY)					X	X			X		
Meningococcal B (MenB)					X	X					

Source: [cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/child/0-18yrs-child-combined-schedule.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/child/0-18yrs-child-combined-schedule.pdf)

Protecting tiny teeth – newborn dental care

It may seem silly to think about your newborn's dental health since they don't have any teeth yet. It is still important to start caring for their mouth and gums right after birth. Then, they can sprout healthy baby teeth, and eventually healthy adult teeth.

More than 40% of children have tooth decay by the time they reach kindergarten. Children who have cavities in their baby teeth are at a much greater risk for cavities in their adult teeth. Don't worry, tooth decay can be prevented by starting dental care early for your newborn.



Here are five ways you can care for your newborn's mouth and teeth:

- **Avoid putting your baby to nap or bed with a bottle.** Milk, baby formula, juices, and other sweet drinks all have sugar in them. Sucking on a bottle filled with these liquids for long periods of time can lead to tooth decay.
- **Wipe their gums twice a day with a clean cloth.** Do this in the morning after they eat, and at night before they go to bed. This helps get rid of any bacteria and sugar in their mouth, both of which can cause cavities.
- **Start gently brushing their teeth twice a day once their first tooth comes in.** Be sure to use only a very small amount of toothpaste with fluoride.
- **Take them to their scheduled well-child visits.** During well-child visits, your pediatrician will check your child's gums and teeth. They may suggest fluoride varnish for your child, which can help prevent cavities. If your doctor doesn't talk about fluoride varnish, ask them about it.
- **Take your child to the dentist by their first birthday.** Along with brushing teeth, going to the dentist is one of the best ways to keep your child's teeth healthy. As a Medicaid member, your child can go to any in-network dentist in Virginia through the Cardinal Cares Smiles program. Call **1-888-912-3456 (TTY: 711)** to find a location near you.

Oh, I see – children’s eye exams

Getting your child’s eyes checked regularly is so important because their vision changes as they grow up. About 80% of what your child learns in school is visual. Taking your child to regular eye exams is the best way to make sure they are seeing well.

How do I get an eye exam for my child?

To have your child’s eyes checked, all you have to do is take them to their well-visits. Eye exams are included in those visits for children under 21. If the doctor finds any problems, your child may be referred to an ophthalmologist (a medical eye doctor).

What happens during an eye exam?

To have your child’s eyes checked all you have to do is take them to their well-child visits. Eye exams are included in those visits for children under 21. If the doctor finds any problems, your child may be referred to an ophthalmologist (a medical eye doctor).

Want more information?

Visit [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org) for more information and guidelines on eye exams.



From pediatrician to primary care doctor

Helping your child take charge of their health

It's bittersweet to watch your children grow into young adults, leave home, and chase their dreams. Sometime between your child's 18th and 21st birthdays, they should take more control of their own healthcare. This includes switching from a pediatrician (a doctor for children and teens) to a doctor who cares for adults (primary care doctor). Once children grow into young adults, it's important to let them ask the doctor their own questions about their health and body changes.

Steps for switching from a pediatrician to a primary care doctor

1. Start to look for a new doctor. You can use our online provider search at sentarahealthplans.com/findadoc to see all of the doctors available in our network. If you need help going through the list, call Member Services, and they can help narrow down your search.
2. Transfer your child's medical records to the new doctor. Your pediatrician can help you with this. You may need to sign an authorization form.
3. Get a copy of your child's immunization record from your pediatrician. The new doctor will need them.
4. Schedule an appointment with the new doctor. Make sure you bring your child's:
 - Member ID card
 - Treatment and surgical history
 - Immunization record

NOTE: *Before your child can see their new doctor, there may be a short gap. If they take any medications, make sure your child has enough until their first appointment. The doctor will want to discuss medications first with you.*

Asthma in children

Asthma is a chronic respiratory condition that causes the airways in a child's lungs to become inflamed making it hard to breathe. This can result in symptoms such as:

- Chest tightness
- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Shortness of breath

If your child has asthma or seasonal allergies, you can help decrease the things that trigger asthma, such as:

- Cold or dry air exposure
- Physical exercise
- Cold and other viruses
- Smoke, air pollution, and certain fumes
- Dust, dust mites, mold, pet dander, or fur
- Latex, cleaning products, and certain foods allergies

It is important for you to monitor your child's symptoms and work with their doctor to develop an Asthma Action Plan. If your child has asthma, a copy of their Asthma Action Plan should be given to the nurse at your child's place of care or school.

Source: [healthychildren.org/English/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/Pages/default.aspx)



Protect your child from RSV

Keep your child healthy by protecting them from respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). RSV is a common virus in the lungs and respiratory tract that causes mild, cold-like symptoms. This contagious virus causes symptoms such as sneezing, runny nose, fever, coughing, wheezing, and fatigue, and can last up to two weeks.

The RSV vaccine can prevent or lessen the chance of getting an RSV infection. Get an RSV vaccine for your child if they are younger than 8 months and born during, or entering, their first RSV season, from September through March. In rare cases, a doctor may decide an RSV vaccine is needed for an infant even though the mother already received an RSV vaccine while pregnant.

The RSV vaccine is also recommended for children between the ages of 8 and 19 months entering their second RSV season who are in at least one of these groups:

- Children who have chronic lung disease from being born prematurely
- Children who have weakened immune system
- Children with cystic fibrosis who have severe disease
- American Indian and Alaska Native children

Source: [cdc.gov/rsv/about/prevention.html#protect-children](https://www.cdc.gov/rsv/about/prevention.html#protect-children)

Importance of lead testing

Don't forget to get your child tested for lead. A lead screening checks to see if your child has any lead in their blood, which could limit growth and development. Your child will need a blood test for lead screening at their well-visits at the age of one or two.

Lead poisoning can damage many parts of the body, including the brain, kidneys, and nervous system. A small amount of lead exposure can be harmful to your child and sometimes the damage is permanent. It can even cause seizures, coma, and sometimes death. Early screenings are important to lessen the risk of lead exposure to ensure children remain healthy.

Some ways lead can be found: Chipped or peeling paint in the home, dust from chipped paint, water from lead pipes, contaminated soil, toys from other countries, and jewelry. While many children show no obvious signs, lead exposure can cause behavioral, hearing, and speech problems. If you live in a house or apartment built before 1978, have it checked by a certified lead inspector.

For more information about lead screenings, contact your Welcoming Baby community health worker or call your child's pediatrician to schedule an appointment.

Exercise and healthy eating

As parents, it is our job to encourage healthy exercise and eating habits in children. Children model what we do starting at a very young age. Children and adults should be eating nutritious foods such as lean protein, grains, fruits, and vegetables on a regular basis. This is especially important as children grow with multiple growth spurts throughout their development.

Children need the following on a daily basis:

- 3–5 servings of vegetables
- 2–4 servings of fruit
- 6–11 servings of grains
- 2 servings of meat and other proteins
- 2–3 servings of dairy

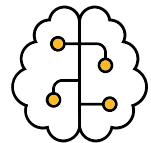
Always discuss changes to your child's diet based on your child and food allergies with your child's pediatrician or nutritionist.

Is your child depressed, or just moody?

It's normal to feel sad, stressed, or even depressed at times. But it's important that your child tells someone how they're feeling. That someone could be a friend, an adult they trust, or even a behavioral health specialist, like a counselor, therapist, or psychologist. If your child doesn't share their feelings, it could lead to more serious problems like depression and harmful thoughts.

Signs of depression in children

- Losing interest in things they used to enjoy
- Having low energy
- Sleeping too much or too little, or tired during the day
- Spending more and more time alone, and avoiding social activities with friends or family
- Dieting or exercising excessively, or fearing weight gain
- Engaging in self-harming behaviors such as cutting or burning their skin
- Smoking, drinking alcohol, or using drugs
- Talking a lot about their fears or worries or acting very irritable much of the time
- Struggling in school or experiencing a recent decline in grades



Ways to help them feel better

- Walking, jogging, lifting weights, and joining a sports team are all great ways to boost mood, de-stress, and improve self-esteem
- Turning off video games, reducing screen time by closing social media, and putting down the phone
- Regular and consistent sleep is important for mental health
- Talking with friends and family is fun and helps boost feelings of well-being
- Joining a support group
- Practicing relaxation techniques, such as meditation
- Listening to music
- Spending time in nature
- Asking for help when needed—your child can meet privately with a healthcare professional instead of talking with friends and family when they are not feeling their usual self

The National Institute of Mental Health has more resources at **[nimh.nih.gov](https://www.nimh.nih.gov)**.

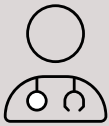
If your child is showing signs of depression, talk to your family doctor or contact a professional counselor. If you sense the potential of suicide, contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **988 (TTY: 711)**. Help is always available 24/7.

You can also call our behavioral health crisis line at **1-833-686-1595 (TTY: 711)**, available 24/7.



Injured or sick, and don't know where to go for care?

Here are some helpful tips on where to get medical care for you and your child.



Your **doctor's office** is where you get routine and preventive care. For your child, that would be their pediatrician. Some examples of why you would go to the doctor's office include:

- Fever
- Headaches
- Mild asthma
- Sore throat

Many doctors offer virtual appointments—online or by phone—in addition to in person.



Call our **FREE 24/7 Nurse Advice Line** if the doctor is not available and you're not sure what to do. Call **1-833-933-0487 (TTY: 711)**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This call is free.

You should not go to the ER for something that can wait or is not life-threatening. Instead, visit your doctor or go to an urgent care center.



Go to an in-network **urgent care center** when your doctor is not available for symptoms and conditions that need attention right away but are not life-threatening, such as:

- Animal bites
- Minor cuts and burns
- Nausea and vomiting
- Simple fractures and sprains



Go to the **emergency room (ER)** for serious or life-threatening conditions that require treatment right away, such as:

- Chest or abdominal pain
- Severe cuts and burns
- Severe vomiting and diarrhea
- Sudden change in vision

Contact us

1-844-671-2108 (TTY: 711)

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