

# Preparing Mom and Child for a Doctor's Visit

By: Dr. Tanya Altmann



Nothing warms my heart more than the smile of a healthy, happy baby. Regular pediatrician visits are essential to a child's healthy development. Sometimes though, the kids are not so excited to see me – parents are actually just as nervous. So the first thing I do is smile at the baby to help them feel safe and hopefully see them smile back. As a pediatrician and a mom of two young ones, I've picked up some tips along the way that I hope will help you and your child be able to smile through your next doctor's visit.

## For Mom...

- **Get to Know Your Pediatrician:** Your baby's first doctor's visit will be within a few days of leaving the hospital. After your hospital follow-up appointment, regular well-baby examinations for the first three years of life are usually scheduled at 2 weeks, 1 month, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 2 years, 2 ½ years and 3 years. It's important to ask your doctor all the questions you may have. Finding someone you are comfortable with is important. Working as a team together will help build the trust needed to form a great relationship.
- **Plan Ahead:** With all that you've got on your mind, it's easy to forget the questions you plan to ask your doctor. Consider jotting them down before your appointment to make sure you remember everything you want to discuss. Better yet, try out the new Kids Wellness Tracker app from the makers of **TYLENOL®**. This handy app is a helpful tool for any new mom needing to stay on top of your child's medications, vaccinations, and other things relevant to your little one's health.
- **Dress for Success:** It's such fun to dress up your newborn in cute outfits! But remember, comfortable, easy-to-remove clothing is best for doctor's visits since your baby will need to be undressed for their weight check and full exam.
- **Take Away Their Pain:** If your child has a fever or pain from teething, consider giving them Infants' **TYLENOL®**. It's been relied on by moms for generations to relieve a baby's discomfort. Remember to call your pediatrician right away though if your baby under 3 months of age has a fever of 100.4 or higher.
- **Be Prepared:** Stock your baby bag with all the necessities, just in case you're away longer than expected. Important items include: several diapers, baby wipes, diaper cream, a changing pad, a plastic bag for dirty diapers or clothes, a change of clothing (for both you and baby), and a blanket, as well as some hand sanitizer. And don't forget to restock items so that you're always ready to go anywhere, anytime.
- **Immunization Preparation:** Your baby will receive several important immunizations in their first few years. But sometimes the immunizations can cause your little one to have a fever or pain. In that case having a pain-reliever, fever-reducer, that's gentle on the tummy, like Infants' **TYLENOL®**, on hand for after the visit is definitely a good idea.
- **Don't Wait:** You don't have to wait for the scheduled well-baby exams to see your pediatrician. You can always make an appointment for your baby or toddler at any time if a specific problem or concern arises between your regular visits.

## For Child...

- **Role Play:** Make going to the doctor's office fun! Role playing at home can prepare your kids for a checkup and help alleviate any fear they may have about going to the doctor. "Play Doctor" kits are a great way to help infants and toddlers feel more comfortable with their different body parts, as well as relieving their anxiety about a doctor's equipment during an exam.
- **Bring a "Friend":** If your infant or toddler has a blanket, favorite stuffed animal, or toy, bring it along to help comfort them in the doctor's office. Most pediatricians will even play along and do a quick "check-up" on your baby's little stuffed friend in order to show them what to expect when it's their turn.

