

Toilet training

Most parents cannot wait for their child to be out of diapers! It's easy for parents to start toilet training too soon because they are tired of dirty diapers.

It's unusual for a child to start using the "potty" before her second birthday; most children are just beginning to learn about it at this age.

Toilet training should be a fun time for your child. She is doing something new. It's a learning time for both child and parent. It also is a time when many parents often feel frustrated or angry.

It is very important to remember that toilet training is not a time to punish your child. Never make her sit on the toilet until she goes "potty." When your child is tired of sitting, it's time to get up.

Remember to praise your child when she uses the toilet. Remember to praise your child when she does not have an accident. Your child will be proud of what she did.

Your child is ready to start toilet training when she:

- Is good at walking and running.
- Can sit quietly to play for a period of time.
- Shows an interest in the toilet.
- Imitates adult behaviors, like brushing teeth and eating neatly.
- Has some verbal skills so she can learn "potty" or "go."

- Knows when she needs to have a bowel movement or urinate (pee).
- Lets you know her diaper needs to be changed.
- Is not in the "no" stage, disagreeing with everything you say.

Children have to be both physically able to go to the toilet and understand that they want to go to the toilet. Rushing your child will not help.

Toilet training takes a different length of time with each child. Some children learn to use the toilet with a few accidents in a short time — three to six months. Other children may take longer — up to a year or more.

Toilet training should be a good experience for your child. Your patience is important. Your child needs to feel good about using the toilet.

Please talk to your doctor about when to start toilet training your child and any other questions you may have.