

TEMPER TANTRUMS

What are Temper Tantrums?

Temper tantrums are common in toddlers, especially between 18 months and 3 years. As toddlers grow, they want to be more independent, but they're too young to make decisions for themselves and are not mature enough to understand "Why", even if they ask it a lot! They often lack the language skills to express their frustration in words.

How to Manage Them

Temper tantrums can be very challenging for parents to handle. If you give in to your child's demands or if you get angry yourself, your child will learn that throwing tantrums gets a response. Responding calmly and with controls the best way to handle tantrums.

Understanding why young children have tantrums helps to form a *structured and consistent plan* for dealing with them. Tantrums can be triggered by a number of things, most often anger or frustration at not getting something your child wants. They are more common if a child is overtired, hungry, or possibly seeking attention.

- Establish routines
- Be consistent in your expectations
- Allow your child to make reasonable choices
- Always respond in a "calm, cool and collected" way
- Ensure safety, and if needed turn away for short period of time
- Don't give your child what he or she wants to make the tantrum stop
- Avoid overstimulation
- Ensure regular mealtimes and enough sleep

Safety Considerations

The main concern of tantrums is that your child will injure themselves. You should take steps to ensure your child's safety until the tantrum has passed.

Other Concerning Behaviours

- **Breath Holding Spells** – Children hold their breath so long that they can turn red/purple or white/blue and then faint. Breath holding spells are really scary for parents, they don't really cause any harm. But be sure to tell your doctor about them.
- **Head Banging** – This is common problem in toddlers, and often associated with tantrums. It can be done for frustration, attention-seeking, and sometime self comfort or pain relief. It is very rare for a child to seriously injure themselves