

Standardized screening for ASD recommended at 18, 24 months

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(HealthDay)—Standardized screening for autism spectrum disorder

(ASD) is recommended at ages 18 and 24 months in primary care, according to a clinical report published online Dec. 16 in *Pediatrics*.

Susan L. Hyman, M.D., from the Golisano Children's Hospital at the University of Rochester in New York, and colleagues updated the 2007 American Academy of Pediatrics clinical reports on the evaluation and treatment of ASD in children.

The authors note that because ASD is common, can be diagnosed from age 18 months, and has evidence-based interventions that may improve function, standardized screening for ASD at 18 and 24 months of age is recommended in [primary care](#). Developmental screening at 9, 18, and 30 months with a validated tool is also recommended. Children should be referred for intervention at the time of identification and not wait for a [diagnostic evaluation](#). Primary care providers should be aware of the [diagnostic criteria](#) for ASD, appropriate etiologic evaluation, and co-occurring medical and behavioral conditions that affect function and quality of life. Behavioral and other interventions to address specific skills and symptoms are supported by an increasing evidence base. Collaboration with families in evaluation and choice of intervention is recommended to promote shared decision making.

"There is no reason to wait for a diagnosis of autism before starting some services, such as speech or behavioral therapies," Hyman said in a statement. "Interventions work best when they are early, when they are intense, and when they involve the family."

One author disclosed [financial ties](#) to MeMix, which is developing an application to assist in nutritional and dietary management of children with autism. A second author disclosed ties to Roche.

More information: [Executive Summary](#)
[Clinical Report](#)

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