

A Guide to Keeping Your Baby Safe

Highlights

The home is the most common place where children are injured. Recognizing and removing hazards can help keep children safe. First aid knowledge can be life-saving in emergency situations.

In This Article

Common household injuries to children
Types of injuries and how to prevent them
Learning first aid and CPR
Product safety and recalls
Emergency contacts and procedures

Common Household Injuries

Every parent wants to keep their baby safe from harm. But it can be hard to know how to protect small children who can be most at risk. Unfortunately, studies have shown that the most common place for any injury to occur is in the home.

Types of Injuries and How to Prevent Them

Injuries to children happen because of hazards - anything that can cause harm. The best way to avoid injury is to spot hazards and remove or make changes so a child doesn't get hurt.

Falls

Falls are the most common cause of injuries to children, though they can be prevented.

Use a harness in a pram and high chair.

Supervise a child when changing their nappy, when they're on a bed or likely to climb.

Place gates or barriers at stairs.

Use corner protectors on tables.

Use rug grips and avoid highly polished, slippery floors.

Drowning

Drowning is a leading cause of death for children under 5 years of age, mostly in swimming pools.

Supervise children near water.

Never leave your baby unattended in the bath, at the beach, or in a pool.

Learn resuscitation and take a class in first aid.

Cover dog bowls containing water, put the toilet lid down, and don't leave buckets of water lying around.

Cover ponds with a grill.

Poisoning

Children are naturally curious and don't understand that poisons and chemicals could harm them.

Store poisons and chemicals in a locked cupboard.

Use child-resistant locks on cupboards.

Lock away medication.

Store medications in their original packaging.

Read labels before giving any medication to your child. If in doubt, speak with a pharmacist.

Burns and Scalds

Young children can be burned and scalded very quickly. Children aged under 5 are at most risk.

Keep hot food and drinks away from children.

Use the back elements of the stove and turn pot handles inwards.

Use a hot water tempering device to control water temperature to a maximum of 50°C.

Run cold water first and last when bathing your child.

For burns and scalds - let cool water run over the skin for at least 20 minutes. Remove clothing immediately. Never use butter, oil, or ice on the skin.

Choking and Suffocation

Check your home, and wherever your child is, for small items which could cause choking.

Stay with your child when they're eating.

Avoid giving your child hard, small pieces of food.

Check toys are safe and don't contain button batteries or small parts, such as button eyes or loose ties.

Keep plastic bags out of reach.

Tie up blind cords, or use a shortening device to keep cords at least 1600 mm above the floor.

Electrocution

Use safety switches.

Unplug electrical appliances when they're not being used.

Use plug-in covers for power points.

Avoid using a wall-mounted heater in the bathroom.

Finger Jams

Finger jam injuries happen when fingers are crushed in the hinge side of doors.

Check your child's fingers are clear of a closing door.

Use wedges or catches to keep internal doors from slamming shut.

Use safety strips on the hinge side of doors that need to be closed.

Toys

Toys that are broken or not age-appropriate can be risky.

Check toys regularly to make sure they're intact.

Throw away toys that have become brittle or have sharp edges.

Choose toys that comply with safety standards.

Use toys that are sturdy and suitable for your child's age and stage of development.

Dog Bites

Any dog is capable of biting a child, even a loved and trusted family dog.

Supervise your child around animals and pets.

Choose a family dog that is a safer breed.

Teach your child to be respectful of dogs and not pat them unless checking first with the owner.

Supervise your child when they're around a dog.

Outside the Home

Know where your child is and who they're with.

Check for hazards in your yard, garage, and sheds.

Check play equipment for safety and that it is stable and secure.

Supervise your child when they're playing outside.

Driveway

Take keys out of the car ignition and store them in a safe place.

Supervise your children when they are near a car.
Block access to the driveway from the house.
Hold your child's hand when they are around cars.

Farm Accidents

Store tools, chemicals, and equipment in locked sheds.
Make silos inaccessible.
Lock up firearms in a safe and store ammunition separately.
Dress young children in bright colors so they can be easily seen.

How to Learn First Aid at Home

It's important to be able to quickly provide first aid to your child at home. Keeping a first aid kit in your home and in your car means you always have easy access. You should also take a first aid and CPR course so you feel confident about doing what you can before help arrives.

How to Learn About Product Safety and Recalls

Parents can check out the latest product recalls issued for children's clothing, toys, furniture, food, and other products. Each recall lists the name of the product, what the issue is, and how to return the product along with the relevant contact details.

Who to Contact in an Emergency

Call emergency services for an ambulance if your child is not breathing, has lost consciousness, or has life-threatening injuries. Any emergency situation that involves a sudden illness or injury is the time to call an ambulance. Remember, your most important job in an emergency could be to ring for help.

Tools and Assistance

Safety Checklists: Use available checklists to ensure your home is childproof and hazard-free.

First Aid Kits: Essential for home and travel, providing immediate support in

case of injury or accident.

CPR & First Aid Courses: Vital for all parents, giving you the skills and confidence to respond in emergencies.

Product Safety Websites: Access the latest product recalls for toys, food, and clothing to ensure your child's safety.

Poisons Information Hotline: A crucial resource in case of accidental poisoning.