

# Home Safety for Babies and Young Children

Anne Arundel County Department of Health  
Anne Arundel County Healthy Babies Coalition

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*Injuries*  
*Can Be*  
*Prevented*



# Presentation Overview

## This presentation will teach you:

### • Tips for preventing:

- Falls
- Poisoning
- Choking and suffocation
- Burns
- Drowning



### • Tips for treating injuries

Presentation Overview



# Injuries Can Be Prevented

- Home safety is important:
  - At the child's home.
  - At other places the child visits such as:
    - Houses of friends and family members
    - Child care providers
- Share the tips with other people who care for children.

Injuries Can Be Prevented

## Prevent Falls

- Never leave a baby alone on furniture.
- Always use safety straps.
  - Changing tables
  - Strollers
  - Shopping carts
  - Swings and bouncers
- Use baby gates on stairways.



**Follow the manufacturer's directions for installing safety rails on beds.**

Make sure baby gates latch securely when you close them.

Baby gates should be placed at the top of stairs and at the bottom of stairs. Children can start to climb up stairs and then fall back down.

Baby gates should have a straight top edge and rigid bars or mesh screen.

Do not use older "accordion" style gates.

## Prevent Falls

- Install window guards on windows above the first floor.
- Do not use baby walkers.
- Use playground equipment designed for the child's age.



Not only are walkers hazardous on stairs, but they have been known to tip over on uneven surfaces.

## Prevent Poisoning

- Keep poisons out of sight and out of reach.
  - Medicines
  - Household cleaners
  - Bug repellants, sprays
  - Paints
  - Other chemicals
- Securely cover trash cans.
- Put safety latches or locks on drawers, cabinets and cupboards.
  - Bathrooms
  - Kitchens
  - Closets or garages



Poisons include medicines, household cleaners, bug repellants and chemicals.

Doorknob covers can also be used to restrict children from certain rooms, such as bathrooms and garages.



## Prevent Poisoning

- If you think a child has eaten or drunk medicine, household cleaners, bug repellants or other chemicals...

**Call Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222**

- Poison Control is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
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Prevent Poisoning

## Prevent Choking and Suffocation

- Babies put non-food items in their mouths.
- So, keep all small objects out of reach.
  - **The Toilet Paper Roll Test:**  
If objects can fit inside the roll,  
they can cause choking.
- Keep plastic bags away from children.




Demonstrate toilet paper roll test.

Hard food includes grapes, hard candies and hot dogs.

When children are given hot dogs, they should be cut into circles and lengthwise.



## Prevent Choking and Suffocation

- Children younger than 4 years:
    - Do not have a full set of teeth.
    - Cannot chew as well as older children.
  - Large pieces of food may cause choking.
  - Do not feed them pieces of food larger than  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in size.
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Prevent Choking

## Prevent Choking and Suffocation

**Do not feed these foods to children  
younger than 4 years:**

- Hot dogs
- Nuts and seeds
- Chunks of meat or cheese
- Whole grapes
- Hard, gooey or sticky candy
- Popcorn
- Chunks of peanut butter
- Raw vegetables
- Raisins
- Chewing gum

American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations



## Prevent Choking and Suffocation Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

- It is an odorless, colorless and TOXIC gas.
- Homes with appliances or fireplaces that use gas, oil, kerosene or wood are at risk.
- Generators used improperly are also a risk.
- Carbon monoxide detectors
  - Install on every floor of the house.
  - Some detect BOTH carbon monoxide and smoke.
  - Test monthly and replace the batteries every year.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless and toxic gas. The odorless gas comes from gas, oil or wood burning heaters or fireplaces, gas lanterns and charcoal grills. It is impossible to see, taste or smell the toxic carbon monoxide fumes; carbon monoxide can make you sick and even kill you before you are aware it is in your home.

Symptoms include:

- Headache
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Lightheadedness

## Prevent Burns

- Keep matches, lighters and lit candles out of reach.
- Keep babies away from:
  - Hot stoves
  - Fireplaces
  - Baseboard heaters
  - Space heaters
  - Any other hot items
- Install outlet plugs or covers over electrical outlets.



Prevent Burns

## Prevent Burns

- Install smoke detectors on every floor of the home, preferably by each bedroom.
  - Some detect BOTH carbon monoxide and smoke.
  - Test monthly and replace the batteries every year



Prevent Burns



## Prevent Burns

### Scald Injuries from Hot Foods

- Do not carry hot liquids or foods near a child.
- Put babies in a safe place while cooking.
- Check the temperature of bottled breast milk, formula and foods before feeding.
  - Use care when heating food in the microwave.
  - Don't microwave breast milk.

Safe places can include a high chair, playpen or crib—out of the way of the cooking!

- Microwaves can heat food unevenly, causing pockets of food/liquid that can be either very hot or still cold.
- Breast milk should never be microwaved directly because it can inactivate some of the beneficial parts of the breast milk. It is best to heat up breast milk or formula in a bath of warm water – bottles can be heated by running them under warm water or setting the bottle in a bowl or glass of warm water.



## Prevent Burns

### Scald Injuries from Hot Water

- Set the water heater temperature to 120°F.
- Install anti-scald devices on the faucets.
- Always check the water temperature before placing the baby in a bath.

**Prevent Burns**  
Scald Injuries from Hot Water

## Prevent Drowning

- A child can drown in a few inches of water.
- Install a fence around the pool that:
  - Is separate from the house.
  - Latches automatically.
  - Completely encloses the pool.



Prevent Drowning

## Prevent Drowning

- **Always supervise children near the water.**
  - Bathtubs, toilets, wading and swimming pools, buckets, puddles and all bodies of water.
- **Use a well-fitting life-jacket**
  - At the pool, beach, lake or river.
  - Do not use inflatable flotation devices without supervision!
    - Water wings/arm bands
    - Flotation rings



Photo Courtesy of the Home Safety Council

Watching children near water is a full-time job! At least one adult should be within an arms reach and watching at all times—no cell phones, reading, Ipods...just watching!

Plastic wading pools should be emptied and turned over after use.

Test-fit life-jackets to ensure proper face-up flotation. Know that it will do the job!

## Tips for Treating Injuries

- Keep well-stocked first aid kits in your home, car and diaper bag.
- Learn infant and child CPR and first aid.
  - Check with the Red Cross and hospitals for classes.
- Call 911 if the injury is severe or for any injuries to the head.
- Call your health care provider for other injuries that need medical treatment.



Tips for Treating Injuries




## What You Can Do

- Many accidents and injuries can be prevented.
- Think like a baby or young child.
  - Crawl on the floor and look for potential dangers.
  - Young children cannot read product and warning labels. Many harmful items look like juice or candy to young children.
- Tell other people who care for your child how they can help prevent injuries.

What You Can Do



## For More Information

- **Anne Arundel County Department of Health**  
410-222-7223 or [www.aahealthybabies.org](http://www.aahealthybabies.org)
  - **U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission**  
1-800-638-2772 or [cpsc.gov/tips.html](http://cpsc.gov/tips.html)
  - **National Safe Kids Campaign**  
202-662-0600 or [safekids.org](http://safekids.org)
  - **American Academy of Pediatrics  
Injury Prevention Program**  
[www.aap.org/family/tippmain.htm](http://www.aap.org/family/tippmain.htm)
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For More Information