



Orchard Pediatrics, P.C.

Newborn through Adolescent Care

SAFETY COUNSELING - THE FIRST YEAR OF LIFE

1. **Keep crib sides raised.** Crib sides need to be kept up and firmly secured to prevent falls. Even if your baby currently can't roll over or pull up, there's always a first time.
2. **If you leave, even for a moment, place your baby in a playpen or a crib with the sides up.** Emphasize the necessity of anticipating developmental stages; the baby's first rollover should not lead to a fall.
3. **Provide constant supervision.** Never leave your baby alone in the home without a capable baby-sitter; at least 13 years old who can respond to emergency situations. Poisonings may occur in a matter of minutes; choking, falls, fires, and similar emergencies require immediate attention. Never leave your child alone in a car.
4. **Keep plastic bags and balloons away from your children.** Plastic wrappers and bags form a tight seal if placed over the nose and mouth. Balloons can be inhaled into the windpipe and may cause death from choking.
5. **Do not put anything around a baby's neck - objects around the neck may strangle the baby.** Necklaces, ribbons, or strings around a baby's neck may get caught on parts of furniture or other objects and cause strangulation. Drawstrings also should be removed from all children's clothing.
6. **Do not allow your child to play with small objects.** Any small objects that can be placed in the mouth (including plant parts) are potential hazards. Even small pieces of food may cause problems; children should not run or play while eating. Parents should be informed about emergency treatment for the choking child. Round or cylindrical food or objects are especially hazardous.
7. **Select an experienced baby-sitter.** All sitters should be at least 13 years old and mature enough to handle common emergencies.
8. **Check heating systems at least once a year.** This annual inspection helps prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, fires, and system malfunction.
9. **Place operable window guards on all windows in your home.** Window guards should be well repaired and inspected regularly. Keep furniture away from windows that can give a climbing toddler access to a window sill. Apartment windows should have guards above the second floor. The spaces above and below window guards should be less than 4 inches to prevent a child from falling through. Children leaning on the window screens can fall through and be seriously injured.
10. **Do not place your child in a walker.** Every year, more than 8,000 injuries occur to children in walkers.
11. **About one third of home fires involving fatalities are caused by smoking.** Smoking in bed or improper disposal of ashes or butts endangers children sleeping in adjacent rooms who may be trapped in the event of fire.
12. **Develop an escape plan in case of a fire in the home.** Identify appropriate exit routes and a family meeting point away from the house.
13. **Buy a fire extinguisher for the home.** The most common cause of home fires are cooking and heating equipment. Multipurpose dry chemical extinguishers should be available in the kitchen and in any room with a furnace or fireplace.

14. **Install a smoke alarm in your home.** Most fire-related deaths occur at night and are the result of inhaling smoke or toxic gas. There is a critical period of 4 minutes to get outside after the alarm sounds. Smoke alarms are recommended for each floor, but particularly for furnace and sleeping areas. Batteries should be checked monthly and replaced yearly.

15. **Do not drink or carry hot liquids when holding your child or when children are nearby.** Scalds result from spilled hot food and drink; scalding injuries can be decreased by avoiding use of tablecloths and keeping cups and saucers from the edge of tables.

16. **Erect barriers around space heaters.** The use of space heaters, woodstoves, and kerosene heaters has been associated with severe burns to toddlers. Appropriate barriers should protect children.

17. **Never leave a child alone in or near a tub, pail, toilet, or pool of water.** The bathtub is a source of severe scalding burns. If the phone or doorbell rings, don't leave an infant or toddler alone even for a moment. Young children can drown in less than 2 inches of water.

18. **Fence in your pool or hot tub on all four sides.** Nationally, drowning is the leading cause of injury-related death in children under 1 year of age.

19. **Your child should ride in a car safety seat during every trip,** even if you will only be traveling a short distance.

20. **NEVER** place an infant in front of an air bag.

21. **Seat a child in the rear of the car.** This is the safest place in the car. Infants should ride facing the rear of the car until they are at least 1 year of age AND at least 20 pounds.

22. **Do not carry children less than 12 months old on bicycles.** Infants too young to sit in a rear bike seat should never be carried on a bicycle. Children 12 months to 4 years old who can wear a helmet may ride in a rear-mounted seat. Use of backpacks or front packs are not recommended. Parents should avoid riding in busy streets. With small children, falls frequently result in head injuries. Children should always wear a helmet that meets Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) or Snell Memorial Foundation Standards.

23. **Remove all guns from places children live and play.** Over 5000 children and adolescents are killed by gunfire each year - injuries almost always inflicted by himself or herself, a sibling, or a friend. Handguns are especially dangerous. If you choose to keep a gun at home, store it unloaded in a locked place. Lock and store ammunition in a separate place.