

INJURY PREVENTION

Birth to Six Months

Did you know that every month nearly **400 children** under four years old die in the United States because of accidents? Most of these accidents can be prevented. Often, accidents happen because parents are not aware of what their children can do. Children **learn quickly**, and in “no time at all” a child who can barely lift his head will be **wiggling** off a bed or **reaching** for your cup of hot coffee.

Car Injuries

Car crashes are the biggest danger to your child’s life and health. Most auto injuries and deaths **can be prevented** by the use of car safety seats. Besides being much safer in a car seat, your child will behave better, so you can pay attention to your driving.

Make certain that your child’s car seat is installed properly. Use it every time your child is in the car. Never place a rear-facing car seat in the front passenger seat of the car.

Falls

As soon as your baby is born, he or she will **wiggle** and **move** and **push** against things with his or her feet. Even these very first movements can result in a fall. As your child grows, he will suddenly be able to roll over and fall off everything. **Do not leave your baby alone on high places** such as changing tables, beds, sofas, or chairs. If left unprotected, **he will fall**. He may be able to crawl as early as six months. **Use gates on stairways** and keep him out of rooms where he might hurt himself. Nearly everyone gets a baby walker as a gift for their baby, however, few people realize the **dangers** they can pose to an infant. Walkers give small infants much more **mobility** than they need, which allows them to get into even more situations that may **cause injury**. Usually you find out that your child has outgrown their walker when they try to get out, and **fall and injure themselves**. Walkers are never necessary for the normal development of a child and can lead to a **false sense of security** when your child is in one.

Burns

At 3 to 5 months, your baby will wave his fists and grab at things. **NEVER** eat, drink, or carry anything hot near your baby or while you are holding him. **He will get burned. You can’t handle both. If your child does get burned, put the burned area in cold water immediately. Then cover the burn loosely with a bandage or clean cloth. Call your doctor for all burns.** To protect your child from scalds, **reduce the temperature of your hot water to 120 to 130 degrees F**. To protect your child from house fires, be sure you have a **smoke alarm** in your house.

Choking

Your baby will soon be exploring his environment by **putting anything and everything into his mouth**. **Never** leave small objects in your baby’s reach, even for a moment. **Never** feed him hard pieces of food. **He may choke. Be prepared** for this very serious event. **Learn how to save the life of a choking child.**