



Home Safety: Information for Parents

Below are some tips and warnings to help ensure your baby's safety when you return home. Be sure to check that all electrical outlets are working.

Medications

- Keep your baby's medicine bottles away from other small children.
- Discuss any home medications with other caregivers and share instructions on the medication sheet you received.

CPR

- Enroll all caregivers in a cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) class.

Bathtub Safety

- Don't rely on baby bathtubs, bathtub rings, pool noodles, floaties, or other air-filled toys to keep your baby above water. These items cannot replace adult supervision.
- Before you begin bathing, have all supplies within arm's reach.
- Prevent your baby from being burned by the water by testing bath water temperature with your inner wrist or a bath thermometer. The water should be lukewarm or no warmer than 37.7 °C to 40 °C (100 °F to 104 °F) and deep enough to allow your baby to settle into the water with his or her body well covered. Move your hand through the tub to mix any hot spots. Wash your baby's face with clean water only. Don't use soap on face until they are older—your doctor will tell you when it is alright to do so. Clean your baby's body and then shampoo the hair with a new clean cloth.

Kitchen Safety

- Put your baby down before handling hot objects.
- Do not hold your baby while cooking.
- Always follow the instructions for how to prepare formula. Formula that has been warmed up in the microwave can burn a baby's mouth. Test the warmth of the formula on your wrist before giving it to your baby.
- Your baby's food should be barely warm.

- Keep hot items, such as coffee, out of reach.
- For burns, run cool water over the burn right away, then call your baby's doctor.

Baby's Room Safety

Babies spend much of their time sleeping; therefore, the baby's bedroom should be the safest room in the house.

- All healthy babies younger than 1 year should sleep on their backs at nap time and at night.
- The safest place to sleep is in a crib with a firm mattress covered by a fitted sheet.
- Infants should never sleep in an adult bed or on a couch.
- Keep pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, and stuffed toys out of your baby's crib.
- When your baby is awake, give him or her at least an hour of tummy time each day.
- Never leave your baby on a bed, couch, or changing table due to the risk of falling.
- Use a crib that meets current standards. It should not have a drop side or any raised corner posts or cutouts where loose clothing could get snagged and strangle your baby. Also, the slats should be no more than $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches apart, and the mattress should fit snugly to prevent entrapment.
- Tighten all screws, bolts, and other hardware securely to prevent the crib from collapsing. Only use hardware provided by the manufacturer.
- Check the paint on the crib. Peeling paint could be harmful if swallowed.
- Keep the crib away from windows. Keep window blind cords, rosaries, or strings away from the crib.
- Do not put your baby to bed with a bottle.
- Do not attach a pacifier to a string or chain while in bed.
- Cover the mattress with a snug-fitting crib sheet with elastic corners and nothing more. Do not use a sheet, or part of one, from a larger bed.



Crib safety. © Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/sids/images/lady-parent-baby.jpg>

Reduce the Risk of SIDS and Suffocation

- Babies up to 1 year should always be placed on their backs to sleep during naptime and at night.
- If your baby falls asleep in a car seat, stroller, swing, infant carrier, or infant sling, he or she should be moved to a firm sleep surface as soon as possible.

Changing Table Safety

A changing table makes changing diapers easier, but falls from such a high surface can be dangerous. Never leave your baby alone on a changing table. Here are a few more tips:

- Choose a sturdy changing table with a 2-inch guardrail around all four sides.
- The top of the changing table should curve inward, like the inside of a circle, so the middle of the table is slightly lower than the sides.
- Buckle the safety strap, but never leave a baby alone, even if he or she is strapped.
- Keep supplies within reach—but out of the baby's reach. Never let your baby play with a powder container. If the container is open and your baby shakes it, he or she is likely to inhale particles of powder that can be harmful to his or her lungs.
- If you use disposable diapers, cover them with clothing. Babies can suffocate if they tear off tiny pieces of the plastic liner and swallow them.

Fire Safety

- Test the smoke alarms monthly and replace the battery when you change the clock for daylight savings time.

- Create a fire escape plan and practice it. If the door is blocked or on fire, is there another way out? Do you need a window ladder? Who will get the baby? Where will you meet outside?
- Do not put electric cords under rugs. Do not overload sockets.
- Keep space heaters away from anything that can catch fire. Never use the oven to heat your home. Blow out candles when you leave the room.
- Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen and post emergency numbers near the phone.
- Do not let anyone smoke in your home. If you smoke, go outside, but never leave your baby alone.
- Install a carbon monoxide (CO) detector on each floor of your house. CO is a toxic gas that has no odor, no taste, and no color. It comes from appliances or heaters that burn gas, oil, wood, propane, or kerosene.
- In the event of a fire, take your baby to a neighbor's home and call 911.

Babysitters

When leaving your baby with a babysitter, place emergency phone numbers near the phone and show them to the babysitter so he or she knows how to reach you. Include the following:

- parents' phone numbers
- neighbors' phone numbers
- emergency 911
- Poison Control Center 800.222.1222
- your baby's doctor and phone number
- your home phone number and address
- your baby's birth date, health insurance information, preferred hospital, and consent for emergency medical treatment if you are away overnight.

Sun and Outdoor Safety

Babies who are younger than 6 months old should stay out of the sun. Use a hat and a carriage cover. Ask your baby's provider about the use of sunscreen.

- Use netting on the stroller to protect your baby from bug bites.
- Before you put your baby into a car seat, make sure the car seat is not too hot from the sun. A hot car seat can hurt your baby.



- Use the car seat every time your baby rides in a car or taxi. Use sunshades for car windows to protect your baby from the sun.

Water Safety

As your baby grows, remember these things:

- Because toddlers can drown in 1 inch of water, empty wading pools or buckets and turn them upside down when not using them.
- Many drownings of young children occur in bathtubs, usually when the caregiver leaves “for just a minute.” Never leave a child in the tub, even with a sibling.
- In a household with toddlers, always put the toilet lid down and use toilet locks. Keep bathroom doors closed and latched so children can’t play in the bathroom.
- Plan ahead and buy latches for cabinets, drawers, doors, and toilets. Cover electrical outlets with safety covers.

Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Water Injuries

www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Water-Safety/waterinjuries-factsheet.html

Healthy Children: Reduce the Risk of SIDS and Suffocation

www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/sleep/Pages/Preventing-SIDS.aspx

Healthy Children: Make Baby’s Room Safe

www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Make-Babys-Room-Safe.aspx

Healthy Children: Safety for Your Child: Birth to 6 Months

www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/Pages/Safety-for-Your-Child-Birth-to-6-Months.aspx

Healthy Children: Bathing and Skin Care

www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/bathing-skin-care/Pages/default.aspx