

Preventing Choking and Related Injuries Transcript

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Preventing choking and related injuries

Choking, suffocation, and strangulation can happen in an instant. However, by being aware of and reducing the risks, you can create a safer home.

In the first part of this presentation, we will learn some important facts, then we will review how you can protect your child from these injuries.

Do you know?

Where do the majority of choking, suffocations, and strangulations occur?

- **In the home**
- **At day care and school**
- **On the playground**

Right. Unfortunately the majority of incidents occur in the home. But there are ways of reducing the risks!

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Facts

Each year, approximately 873 children ages 14 and under die from airway-obstruction injuries.

More than 19,000 children were treated in hospital emergency rooms for choking-related episodes in 2005.

In 2004, 963 children aged 14 and under died from strangulation.

Choking accounts for almost half of all toy-related deaths.

Each year, cribs and playpens are responsible for half of all nursery product-related strangulation and suffocation deaths among children ages 5 and under.

The majority of child choking injuries are associated with food.

For a comprehensive Fact Sheet, click on the Facts button.

What can I do?

Choking, strangulation, suffocation and SIDS, are life-threatening incidents that can happen in seconds. There are ways you can keep your child safe and prevent this from happening.

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Do you know?

In what position should you always put your infant to sleep?

- On her back
- On her stomach
- Whichever she seems to favor

Yes! The "Back to Sleep" campaign has saved lives by reducing the risk of sudden infant death syndrome.

Years ago, the stomach was generally accepted. However, research has shown that placing your infant on her back greatly reduces the chance she will die from sudden infant death syndrome.

Even if your child seems to prefer her stomach, be consistent about placing her on her back, as it greatly reduces the chance she will die from sudden infant death syndrome. She will eventually get used to this position.

Infant risks

Your child is at an increased risk of sudden unexpected infant death if she is on her stomach, in an unsafe sleep environment or exposed to second hand smoke.

Always place your baby to sleep on her back in a safety approved crib. The crib mattress should be free of extra pads, and covered with a tight fitted sheet.

The only thing that should go in the crib is your infant. Never put pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, bumper pads, stuffed animals, or toys in the crib.

If you feel your infant needs extra warmth, consider using a one piece sleeper instead of a blanket.

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Infant risks

Your infant has limited motor skills and strength. Sharing a bed, couch, or chair with adults can be deadly for a baby.

Have your infant sleep in her own crib, but close to your bed.

Sleeping with babies while you are on the couch or in a recliner is also risky.

Unless you are traveling, your baby's car seat is not recommended as a safe place to sleep.

Do you know?

Your child bikes to a playground. What should she do with her bike helmet once she arrives?

- Keep it on to protect her head when playing
- Take it off until she is ready to ride again

Actually, your child should remove her helmet. Children can squeeze through gaps that their helmets cannot, resulting in a death from strangulation.

That's right! Your child should remove her helmet. Children can squeeze through gaps that their helmets cannot, resulting in a death from strangulation.

Food choking hazards

There are also a number of foods that are common choking hazards because of their size and shape, or they are difficult to chew. Some of these include hotdogs, grapes, peanuts, candy, carrots, and popcorn. Avoid these foods, until your child is older. And of course, cut all foods into small, bite-sized pieces until your children are older and become better at chewing thoroughly, and supervise them during meals and snacks.

Food is a choking risk at any age. To reduce the chance of your child choking on food, make sure she sits while eating.

Try not to feed your child in the car. If she starts choking, you may not be able to assist her in time.

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Non-food choking hazards

As your little one is starting to explore the world, there are many everyday items that can cause choking. Non-food items, such as coins, small balls, objects that conform like balloons, and small toys intended for older children should be kept out of reach until your child no longer puts things in her mouth. Testing tubes are available at children's stores. If an item can be placed within the tube, your child should not have access to it.

Strangulation hazards

Pacifier clips, pull toy strings, and mobile strings should have short lengths to prevent strangulation; never extend these strings, and of course, never hang a pacifier around your baby's neck.

Strangulation hazards

Preschoolers have vivid imaginations, and certain play can be dangerous. Superhero or princess capes, or playing "doggie" with a leash are examples of pretend play that involves dangerous items around the neck. Make sure all dress up clothes have fasteners that detach easily with even light pressure.

Strangulation hazards

Pull cords on your blinds can also be a dangerous hazard. Cut any loops in the cords, or better yet, keep cords out of reach.

Strangulation hazards

Clothing items may have drawstrings that can cause strangulation. Remove or snip strings to prevent injury. Items such as scarves and necklaces should be worn with care.

One safety item, helmets, can actually become a hazard when used improperly. Your child should always remove her bike helmet before playing, especially on playground equipment, as the strap or helmet can get caught and cause strangulation.

First aid

If your child is choking or not breathing, call 911 immediately. If you have taken a child CPR course, begin administering CPR until help arrives. CPR and first aid classes are offered through many area hospitals and community agencies, or the American Red Cross.

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Choking and strangulation are scary because they can happen so quickly and easily. Keep your child safe by being aware of choking hazards, strangulation and suffocation risks, and take measures to reduce these risks in your home.

Thank You

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