



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 provider 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 provider.

Nursery Safety

Babies spend much of their time sleeping; therefore, the nursery should be the safest room in the house.

- Your baby should sleep in a crib, not in your bed. The crib should hold a firm mattress with tight-fitting sheets.
- The crib should not have any soft surfaces, including waterbeds, sheepskins, comforters, or fluffy quilts.



- Remove any loose blankets, toys, pillows, or stuffed animals from the 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.
- Keep the sides of the crib raised. If the bars of the crib are not close enough, a baby's head can get caught between the bars. You can check to see if your crib is safe by taking an upright soda can and placing it between the bars. If you are not able to push the can through the bars, your baby's head will not fit through.
- 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.

When buying a new crib, ensure that the crib is safe. However, if you are getting a used crib from a store or a friend, be sure to check the following:

- It is not recalled (see www.cpsc.gov).
- It meets all current federal industry standards.
- Mattress support is securely attached to the crib headboard and footboard.
- There are no cutout areas on the headboard or footboard.
- Slats are not missing, loose, splintered, or cracked. Slats should 2-3/8 in. apart or less; a soda can will not fit through. (If it does, a baby's head could, too.)
- The mattress fits snugly against the frame. It should allow no more than two fingers between the edge of the mattress and the crib side.
- The sides of the crib are at least 22 in. above the mattress.
- There are no sharp corners, jagged edges, or projections, such as posts. Corner posts should be 1/16 of an inch high or less.
- No parts are broken, cracked, or loose.
- Screws or bolts holding the crib together are tight and not missing.
- Drop-side latches should be too difficult to be released by a young child.
- Regularly check the crib's hardware. If any screws or slats loosen again after tightening, it's best to replace the crib.
- Place the crib at least 2 ft away from heating vents, windows, window-blind cords, drapery, or wall lamps and 1 ft from walls and furniture.
- 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.

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. 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.
- In case 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. Tell the babysitter how to reach you. Include the following:

- emergency contact name and number
- emergency 911
- Poison Control Center 800.222.1222
- your baby's provider and phone number
- your baby's birth date
- your baby's health insurance information, which hospital to use, 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 but no 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 babies from the sun.

Water Safety

As your baby grows, remember these things:

- Because toddlers can drown in 1 in. 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.

Additional Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Water Injuries

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

Healthy Children: Safety for Your Child Birth to 6 Months

www.healthychildren.org/English/tips-tools/Pages/Safety-for-Your-Child-Birth-to-6-Months.aspx

Healthy Children: Bathing Your Newborn

www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/bathing-skin-care/pages/Bathing-Your-Newborn.aspx