

# **Baby Equipment at Four Months**

## **High chairs**

Select a chair with a wide base, so it cannot be tipped over if someone bumps against it.

If the chair folds, be sure it is locked each time you set it up.

Whenever your child sits in the chair, use the safety straps. This will prevent your child from slipping down and causing serious injury or even death. Never allow your child to stand in the high chair.

Do not place the high chair near a counter or table. Your child may be able to push hard enough against these surfaces to tip the chair over.

Never leave a young child alone in a high chair and do not allow older children to climb or play on it, as this could tip it over.

A high chair that hooks on to a table is not a good substitute for a more solid one. If you plan to use this type of chair when you eat out or when you travel, look for one that locks on to the table. Be sure the table is heavy enough to support your child's weight without tipping. Also, check to see whether your child's feet can touch a table support. If your child pushes against the table, it may dislodge the seat.

## **Baby walkers**

- Baby walkers sent an estimated 8,800 children younger than 15 months to the hospital in 1999.
- Thirty-four children died during the years of 1973 through 1998 because of baby walkers.

### **Children in baby walkers can:**

- Roll down the stairs--which often causes broken noses and severe head injuries. This is how most children get hurt in baby walkers.
- Get burned--a child can reach higher when in a walker. A cup of hot coffee on the table, pot handles on the stove, a radiator, a fireplace, or a space heater are all now in baby's reach.
- Drown--a child can fall into a pool, bathtub, or toilet while in a walker.
- Be poisoned--reaching high objects is easier in a walker.

### **There are no benefits to baby walkers**

You may think a walker can help your child learn to walk. But walkers do not help children walk sooner. In fact, walkers can delay normal muscle control and mental development.

Most walker injuries happen while adults are watching. Parents or caregivers simply cannot respond quickly enough. A child in a walker can move more than 3 feet in 1 second. Therefore, walkers are never safe to use, even with close adult supervision. Make sure there are no walkers at home or wherever your child is being cared for. If your child is in childcare at a center or at someone else's home make sure there are no walkers.

### **Throw out your baby walkers!**

Try something just as enjoyable out safer, such as the following:

- "Exersaucers" have no wheels but have seats that rotate, tip and bounce
- Playpens—great safety zones for children as they learn to sit, crawl, or walk.
- High chairs –older children often enjoy sitting up in a high chair and playing with toys on the tray.

On July 1,1997, new safety standards were implemented for baby walkers. Walkers are now made wider so they cannot fit through most doorways, or are made with a braking mechanism to stop them at the edge of a step. But these new walker designs will not prevent all injuries from walkers. They still have wheels, so children can still move fast and reach higher.

The American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Belated Institutions have called for a ban on the manufacture and sale of baby walkers with wheels. *Keep your child safe. Throw away your baby walker*