

Safety Tips for the First Month

Did you know that hundreds of children younger than 1 year die every year in the United States because of injuries — most of which could be prevented?

Often, accidents happen because parents are not aware of what their children can do. Children *learn fast*, and before you know it, your child will be *wiggling* off a bed or *reaching* for your cup of hot coffee.

Car Injuries

Car crashes are a great threat to your child's life and health. Most injuries and deaths from car crashes can be prevented by the use of car safety seats. Your child, besides being much safer in a car safety seat, will behave better, so you can pay attention to your driving. Make your newborn's first ride home from the hospital a safe one — in a car safety seat. Your infant should ride in the back seat in a rear-facing car seat.

Make certain that your baby's car seat is installed correctly. You can check with your local fire department. Often times they have programs to check and ensure that your car seat is installed correctly. Read and follow the instructions that come with the car safety seat and the sections in the owners' manual of your car on using car safety seats correctly. Use the car safety seat **EVERY** time your child is in a car. **NEVER** put an infant in the front seat of a car with a passenger air bag.

Falls

Babies *wiggle* and *move* and *push* against things with their feet soon after they are born. Even these very first movements can result in a fall. As your baby grows and is able to roll over, he or she may fall off of things unless protected. Do not leave your baby alone on changing tables, beds, sofas, or chairs. Put your baby in a safe place such as a crib or playpen when you cannot hold him.

If your child has a serious fall or does not act normally, loses consciousness or vomits after a fall, call our office.

Burns

NEVER carry your baby and hot liquids, such as coffee, or foods at the same time. Your baby can get burned. You can't handle both! To protect your child from tap water scalds, reduce the maximum temperature of your hot water heater to 120° F.

If your baby gets burned, immediately put the burned area in cold water. Keep the burned area in cold water until he or she stops crying. Then cover the burn loosely with a bandage or clean cloth and call us.

To protect your baby from house fires, be sure you have a working smoke alarm in your home. Test the batteries in your smoke alarm every month to be sure that they work. Change the batteries once a year on a date you'll remember, such as daylight savings time.

Choking/Suffocation

To prevent possible suffocation and reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), your baby should always sleep on his or her back. **NEVER** put your baby on a water bed, bean bag, or anything that is soft enough to cover the face and block air to the nose and mouth.