

Keeping Baby Safe

As a parent, bringing a new baby home from the hospital can mean many things. You may find that you have many questions. You're trying to remember what the doctor said to do or other information you've heard. You want to make sure you're going to give your baby the best start possible: a happy, healthy, and safe start.

Here are some tips that may be helpful as you settle in to life with your new baby, as well as some hints to remember as your baby grows.

- Your baby should be put to sleep on her back. Her crib should meet current safety standards. Remove all bedding such as comforters, and pillows. Doing so may help decrease the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- Never put your infant's furniture near windows. Keeping furniture away from windows will prevent risk of strangulation from window blinds or curtain cords.
- To prevent accidental poisonings, any medicines or household cleaning products should be kept out of reach of small children. Containers should have safety caps and cabinets containing these items should be kept locked.
- Be sure to check the water temperature at bath time to prevent your child's skin from being burned. Water temperature should be between 90 and 100 °F.
- Never leave your child unattended in the bath tub. In addition, be mindful of other household water dangers, such as open toilets, 5 gallon buckets, or swimming pools. Keeping your child away from these dangers could prevent him from drowning.
- Make sure you use all safety straps provided with any baby equipment such as; highchairs, swings, and strollers properly. Doing so may prevent falls or injuries.
- In the kitchen, be sure to keep knives and other sharp objects out of your child's reach. You should also keep plastic bags and matches locked away.
- As your child grows and begins to explore, you may want to use the back burners on the stove. Little hands can reach up and touch burners or grab pots and pans—using the back burners will help to avoid burns and spills.
- Install smoke detectors in all areas of your home, especially in sleeping areas. Change the batteries annually.
- Blocking stairways with a safety gate is one way of preventing falls.
- Put covers on all electrical outlets. Taking this safety measure will prevent electric shock to children.
- Be sure to keep all choking hazards out of reach of children. Get down on your child's level and see if you notice anything small that might seem to be of interest to your child. Removing these objects or keeping them out of your child's reach will help to avoid choking hazards.