

# SAFETY

Injuries are the number one cause of death in children. The majority of accidents are preventable if proper precautions are taken. Listed below are some tips to prevent injury and keep your child safe. Please also refer to the safety information pertinent to your child's age under "General Care of Your Newborn" and "Your Growing Child".

## **Car Seats and Seat Belts**

Car seats are an absolute necessity for infant safety. Your infant should be in a rear-facing care seat in the middle of the backseat until 2 years of age and 20 pounds. Children should then be placed in an appropriate forward facing car seat. Once children are over 4 years of age and over 40 pounds they may be placed in a booster seat. It is now recommended that children remain in a booster seat until they are 4' 9" tall or over 8 years of age. Your child should ALWAYS be required to wear a seat belt. Children under age 13 or less than 100 pounds should ride in the backseat.

## **Hot Water Heaters and Burns**

Most hot water heaters are set at 140 F, a temperature that can quickly cause burns in infants. If you have an infant or small child in the home, your hot water heater should be turned down to 120 F. This will reduce the risk of burns; the same burn that takes 5 minutes at 120 F takes only 6 seconds at 140 F.

Once your child is able to reach and grab, she will. Never leave irons, curling irons, or other appliances unattended. Once your child can pull to a stand, cook on the rear burners and never leave your child unattended in the kitchen.

## **Smoke Detectors and Fire Education**

Every level of your home should have a working smoke detector. If you rent your home, your landlord is required to provide smoke detectors. Remember to check each smoke detector once a month. Make sure that everyone in the household knows what to do if the smoke alarm goes off. Teach your child where to go and who to call. When your child is old enough, discuss "stop, drop and roll".

## **Baby Walkers**

There is NO safe way to use a baby walker and NO home is safe from the potential hazards associated with walkers. Walkers are responsible for many life threatening injuries in infants. Even homes without stairs are unsafe, as infants are more mobile and can get into dangerous situations more quickly. PLEASE never use an infant walker.

## **Poisoning**

Poisonous materials, cleaning supplies and medicines are dangerous to any child. These items should be stored up high, well out of reach of children of any age. Do not depend on cabinet latches or locks when at your child's level. Never leave these substances sitting out, even in a childproof container.

If your child ingests something he shouldn't, or if something gets into his eye or on his skin, please call the Poison Control Center immediately. They are located at Children's Hospital and are staffed 24 hours a day. They can advise you as to how to care for your child, symptoms to watch for, and whether your child needs to be seen emergently.

**Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222**

## **Drowning**

Drowning is a leading cause of death in children 1 to 4 years of age. If you have a pool you should have a barrier between your home and the pool. You should have either 1) a fence(at least 5-foot high) with a self-closing, self-latchable, locking gate around the pool, 2) self-closing, self-latching doors from the home, as well as windows that are secured and locked or 3) a key-operated, motorized safety cover that is kept locked. Never leave furniture or any item out that a child could use to climb over a fence surrounding a pool. Do not allow riding toys around the pool. If you are near a pool somewhere other than home, you need to know where your child is at all times. Drowning is a year-round threat and children have drowned or suffered a "near drowning" in wading pools, ponds, rivers, bathtubs, toilets and buckets of water left unattended.

## **Helmets**

The effectiveness of safety helmets in protecting your child from a life threatening head injury is undeniable. Your child should be taught and required to wear an appropriately fitting safety helmet when on anything with wheels (bicycles, scooters, rollerblades, skateboards, etc.) no matter where they are. Participating in these activities without a helmet should not be an option!

## **Sun Protection**

Sunscreen is recommended for all children over 6 months of age wherever they are exposed to sunlight. Use a sunscreen with at least an SPF of 15; reapply every two hours or more frequently if it is rinsed off by swimming. Sunscreen has not been proven to be safe in children less than 6 months of age. These children should be dressed in light clothing and kept in the shade.

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**Questions? Contact:**

Small World Pediatrics

Office of Dr. Kathleen C. Stiles and Dr. Sean M. Vellucci

5175 Morse Road, Suite 400

Gahanna, OH 43230

(614)741-4411



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**Pediatrics**

