

# Household injuries

## Most accidents happen at home

Babies and toddlers learn by exploring. Shouting or smacking will not teach them about safety and when they are too young to understand the dangers it is up to us to make sure they are safe. A typical household is full of possible dangers. There are lots of things we can do to help prevent accidents in the home. Equally we need to make sure children are safely contained within the house with door locks and windows being closed and having safety catches. There can be dangers from outside, so make sure your child understands that if they are able to open the door, they do not open it to anyone they do not know or trust.

Check toys with small pieces are not left out for a toddler to chew and choke on. Make sure toys have safety marks.

Balconies and outdoor spaces and garden ponds can be danger areas, so make sure your child is never left alone. Make sure there is nothing they can climb onto whilst on a balcony and ensure there are no gaps through which they could squeeze.

Even the most good-natured pet can lash out or bite. Animals and young children should not be left alone together. Never trust an older toddler to be left alone with a baby even for a few minutes.

## Dangers around the home

Sockets, wires and plugs - use plug guards.

- Danger of falls - use window locks, stair guards and do not leave babies alone on beds or chairs.
- Smoking at home - STOP.
- Burns - children can get burnt from straightening irons, hot pans, scalding water. Use an oven guard and install a smoke detector.
- Medicines, drugs and chemicals - keep them up high and in a locked cupboard.
- Pets - never leave a child alone with a pet.
- Small items which could be swallowed and cause choking.

## Head injury

One of the signs of a severe head injury is being unusually sleepy, this does not mean you cannot let your child sleep.

**You need to get urgent medical attention if:**

- **They are vomiting persistently (more than 3 times).**
- **They are complaining it hurts.**
- **They are not responding at all.**
- **Pain is not relieved by paracetamol or ibuprofen.**

If they are tired from what's happened, or from crying, then it is fine to let them sleep. If you are worried in any way about their drowsiness, then you should wake your child an hour after

they go to sleep. Check that they are okay, and that they are responding normally throughout the night.

**1**

Spend some time at home exploring as if you were a toddler.

**2**

Make a list of potential dangers.

**3**

Think about types of safety equipment or how you can move these things out of your child's reach.

### **Smokefree**

Call 0800 032 0102 or visit [www.smokefree.nhs.uk](http://www.smokefree.nhs.uk)

