

**USER-FRIENDLY ANTICIPATORY GUIDE
INFANCY and SAFE MOTHERHOOD**

Adapted from: Parents/ Nemours Kidshealth

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/>

Guide to First-time Parents:

How Do I Handle My Baby?

- Wash your hands or use a hand sanitizer before handling your baby.
- Support your baby's head and neck. Cradle the head when carrying your baby.
- Never shake your baby, whether in play or in frustration.
- Always fasten your baby securely when using a carrier, stroller, or car seat.
- Avoid rough play with newborns, such as jiggling them on the knee or throwing them in the air.

What Should I Know About My Baby's Sleep?

Follow these recommendations for a safe sleep environment for your infant:

- Always place your baby on their back to sleep, not on the stomach or side.
- Use a firm, flat sleep surface. Cover the mattress with a sheet that fits snugly.
- Keep plush toys, pillows, blankets, unfitted sheets, quilts and comforters out of your baby's sleep area.
- Keep your baby away from smokers.
- Look around for things that your baby can touch from a seated or standing position in the crib.
- Do not use weighted blankets, sleepers, or swaddles on or around your baby.

Prevent Choking?

Which Foods Are Choking Hazards?

Hard, smooth foods can block the windpipe. Do not give these to kids younger than 4 years old:

- nuts
- sunflower seeds
- watermelon with seeds
- cherries with pits
- raw carrots, peas, and celery
- popcorn
- hard candy
- raw apples and pears

These soft foods should be cut into small pieces, peeled if they have skin, or avoided:

- cheese cubes
- hot dogs and sausages (cut into half-moon or triangle shapes, not rounds)
- grapes
- caramels

Remember to:

- Encourage kids to sit when eating and to chew thoroughly.
- Teach kids to chew and swallow their food before talking or laughing.
- Be especially careful during parties when bowls of nuts or candies may be easy for kids to reach or may have fallen on the floor.

Which Toys and Other Small Objects Are Choking Hazards?

- balloons
- toys with small parts and doll accessories
- coins
- safety pins
- paperclips
- push pins
- marbles and small balls
- water beads
- nails, bolts, and screws
- erasers
- batteries
- broken crayons
- jewelry (rings, earrings, pins, etc.)
- small magnets
- small caps for bottles, including chocolate syrup, pancake syrup, and soda



How Can I Help My Baby Avoid Choking on Toys and Other Objects?

- Check the floors, under rugs, between cushions, and on counters within your baby's reach for small objects or toy parts.
- Always follow all manufacturers' age recommendations when buying toys.
- Make sure small refrigerator magnets are out of your child's reach.
- Check toys often for loose or broken parts.
- Warn older kids not to leave loose game parts or toys with small pieces in easy reach of younger siblings.
- Throw out or recycle all batteries safely, especially button batteries.
- Encourage toddlers not to put crayons, or erasers in their mouths when coloring or drawing.
- Put away all breakable objects and those that are small enough to fit in small mouths.

Preventing Injuries from Falling, Climbing, and Grabbing

Walkers

- 1) Do not use a walker for an infant or toddler.
- 2) Instead of a walker, consider an activity saucer that does not move.

Windows

- 1) Do not rely on window screens to keep toddler from falling out of windows.
- 2) Open windows from the top or use window guards to prevent your toddler from falling through screens or open windows. Make sure window guards are childproof.

Stairs

- 1) Never leave your baby alone around stairs — even those that are gated.
- 2) Keep stairways clear of toys, shoes, loose carpeting, etc.
- 3) Place a guard on banisters and railings if your baby can fit through the rails.
- 4) Install hardware-mounted safety gates at the top and bottom of every stairway.
- 5) Teach your toddler how to go down stairs backward.

Around Your Home

- 1) Do not keep loose rugs on the floor.
- 2) Never put babies in child safety seats, infant seats, or bouncer seats on a countertop or on top of furniture. The force of the baby's movements could propel the seat over the side and cause serious injuries.
- 3) Make sure all pieces of furniture your toddler might climb on — tables, bureaus, cabinets, TV stands, etc. — are sturdy and will not fall over.
- 4) Clean up any spills around the home right away.
- 5) Apply nonskid strips to the bottoms of bathtubs.
- 6) Use cabinet locks on cabinets containing cleaning products.

Preventing Burns and Fires

Bathrooms

- 1) Set the thermostat on your hot water heater to 49°C, or use the "low-medium setting" — a child can be scalded in 5 seconds in water at 60°C.
- 2) Always test bath water with your elbow or the inside of your wrist before putting your child in it.
- 3) Always turn the cold water on first and turn it off last when running water in the bathtub or sink.
- 4) In the tub, turn kids away from the faucet or fixtures so they are less likely to play with them or accidentally turn on the hot water.

Kitchen/Dining Room

- 1) Have a 3-foot "no play" zone around the stove where toddlers are not allowed to be. Keep rolling or moving toys out of the kitchen.
- 2) Keep hot drinks and foods out of reach of toddlers.
- 3) Do not drink hot liquids or soup with a child sitting on your lap, or carry hot liquids or dishes near baby.
- 4) Do not hold a baby or small child while cooking.
- 5) Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove every time you cook.
- 6) Block access to the stove as much as possible.
- 7) Avoid using tablecloths or large placemats.
- 8) When you are not using them, unplug kitchen appliances that a toddler can reach. Keep cords out of reach.

