



# Home, Safe Home

## Childproofing: An Age-By-Age Guide

Each year, 2.5 million American children are injured or killed in household accidents-most of which could be prevented with simple precautions. The American Academy of Pediatrics advises updating safety measures as your child's mobility develops. BY DANA SULLIVAN

### For Newborns and Infants 3 Months and Under:

#### Check Crib and Playpen

- Don't put pillows, soft bedding, or stuffed toys in your Baby's crib-they create a risk of sudden infant death syndrome.
- Make sure holes in mesh-side playpens are less than 1/4 inch across and free from tears to prevent an infant from becoming trapped.

#### Prevent Falls

- Install and use a safety belt on your infant's changing table.
- Be sure your baby is strapped in snugly when sitting in a bouncy seat or swing.
- Place rugs under the changing table and the crib for protection in case of a fall.

#### Protect Against Burns

- Keep bedding and draperies at least three feet from electrical outlets in use.
- Set your water heater to 120° Fahrenheit or less.



### For Babies Who Are Sitting, Crawling, or Cruising:

#### Prevent choking and Suffocation

- Keep button-sized batteries, coins, small toys-anything that can fit inside a standard cardboard toilet-paper roll out of your infant's reach.
- Remove mobiles and hanging toys from the crib if your baby can touch them.
- Shorten drapery and blind cords; cut any that are looped.
- Remove the cover of, or install slam-proof hinges on, any toy box; if you leave the top on, and if the box is large enough to trap you child, make sure it has adequate breathing holes.

#### Reduce Risk of Poisoning

- Lock dangerous substances- alcoholic beverages, cleaning and laundry supplies, medications (including vitamins and nonprescription drugs), bug spray, and



pesticides- in upper-level cabinets.

- Place houseplants out of your child's reach; know the names of your plants in case he eats part of one.
- Post the number of your local poison-control center on all phones.
- Keep a bottle of ipecac as well as activated charcoal in your home, but don't use either unless told to do so by a medical professional.

#### Prevent Shocks and Burns

- Cover electrical Outlets, including those near countertops, with child-resistant covers (some toddlers can pry out plastic plugs).
- Unplug all bathroom electrical appliances not in use and store them away from toilets, sinks and bathtubs.
- Have an electrician install ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs)- which reduce the current when an

appliance gets wet- on outlets near sinks and tubs.

- Place barriers around fireplaces, radiators, and space heaters.
- Put matches and lighters in a latched drawer or cabinet.

#### Protect Against Falls

- Install hardware-mounted safety gates at top and bottoms of stairways. (Pressure-mounted ones may not hold back a determined cruiser.)
- Never use a accordion-style enclosure (or gates)-children can get their head caught in the openings.
- Pad the edges of coffee tables.

#### Secure Furniture

- Fasten shelves to walls so they don't topple over if a child pulls up on them.
- Position audio and video components out of reach.



## For Children Who Are Cruising and Walking:

Once your child is truly mobile, accident-proofing becomes almost a daily chore. Here are some precautions to take throughout your home.

### In the Bathroom

- Install toilet-seat locks to prevent drowning, and teach older siblings to close the seat cover and the bathroom door.
- Place nonskid mats or rugs in the bathtub and on the bathroom floor.
- Install child-resistant latches on cabinets and drawers that contain mouthwash, tooth-paste and cosmetics.
- Keep all vitamins and prescriptions, nonprescription, and herbal medications in their original con-

tainers with child-resistant caps, and store them in a latched cupboard.

### In the Kitchen



- Place knob protectors on the stove; cook on rear burners when ever possible.
- Store cleaning supplies in a locked cabinet.



- Keep chairs and step stools away from counters and the stove.



- Keep electrical appliances unplugged and out of reach.
- Secure knives and other sharp utensils out of reach or in a locked cupboard.

### Throughout the House and the Garage

- Store tools and garden and lawn-care equipment and supplies in a locked closet or shed.
- Place foam-grip guards on frequently used interior doors to prevent them from closing on or pinching fingers.
- Place Furniture away from windows.
- Use nonslip rug pads under area rugs.
- Install window guards on windows that are not fire exits. Install bars on screens that only adult can push open from the inside.
- If possible, carpet stairways.

## Resources

**If you can't find childproofing supplies at your hardware store, call for free copies of the following catalogs:**

- **Perfectly Safe:**  
800-837-5437
- **The First Years:**  
800-533-6708

**For more detailed information on children's safety in the home, write the National Safe Kids Campaign at 1301 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W. Suite 1000, Washington DC 20004, or visit [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)**

*Sources: Murray Katcher, M.D., Ph.D., chairman of the American Academy of Pediatrics' committee on injury and poison prevention; National Safe Kids Campaign; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Healthy Homes Alert; and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.*

# Poison Prevention Tips For Baby-sitters

Poison Control number is: 1-800-222-1222

The most important responsibility for you as a baby-sitter is the safety of the children in your care. Poison prevention helps keep children safe.

Each year in Maricopa County, over 11,000 children under the age of three are poisoned. Most poisonings take place in the home and are not very serious. But sometimes the poisoning is very serious and causes medical problems. Prevent poisonings, learn the what, when and where of poison prevention and what to do if a poisoning does occur.

## What can be poisonous to children??

Children are naturally curious and they will eat or drink anything! Even if it doesn't look or taste good.

- ◆ **Medicines** - prescription and non-prescription drugs (vitamins, iron pills, pain pills like aspirin and Tylenol)
- ◆ **Cleaning products** - furniture polish, pine oil cleaner, dishwasher detergent, drain openers and window cleaners
- ◆ **Bug Killers** - moth balls, sprays, granules and roach motels
- ◆ **Cosmetics** - mouthwash, perfume and aftershave
- ◆ **Products for cars** - gasoline, motor oil, antifreeze and windshield wiper fluid
- ◆ **Batteries and battery acid** - car and button batteries for watches and calculators

◆ **Plants** - diffenbachia, yellow oleander, caladium, china berries, philodendron and pothos

◆ **Black Widow Spiders**

◆ **Bark Scorpions**

◆ **Rattlesnakes**

◆ **Tobacco** - Cigarettes, cigars other tobacco products

◆ **Alcoholic beverages** - beer, wine and liquor

## When do poisonings happen??

◆ Anytime, but especially when the regular daily routine is changes. For example, when grandparents come to visit or a baby-sitter is left in charge.

◆ Poisonings often happen right after an adult or older child uses the harmful product or medicine.

# Poison-proof Your Home Checklist

## KITCHEN

- Ant/roach/water bug killers
- Cleansers
- Carpet/upholstery cleaners
- Furniture polish
- Soaps/detergents

## CORROSIVES

- Ammonia
- Automatic dishwasher cleaner
- Drain openers
- Metal cleaners
- Oven cleaners

## MEDICINES

- Pain killers
- Diet Aids
- Vitamin/iron pills

## LAUNDRY

- Bleachers
- Disinfectants
- Soap/detergents

## BEDROOM

- Cosmetics
- Baby powder
- Nail Polish/remover
- Jewelry cleaners

## HOUSEPLANTS

- Caladium
- Dumbcane
- Philodendron
- Pothos
- Other Plants

## MEDICINES

- Cough/cold medicine
- Prescription drugs
- Sleeping aids

## BATHROOM

- Aftershave lotion
- All medicines
- Bath Oil
- Cleaners
- Deodorizers/sanitizers
- Drain openers
- Hair Removers
- Mouthwash
- Permanent wave solution
- Shampoo/hair products

## GARAGE/BASEMENT

### STORAGE

- Antifreeze
- Fertilizer
- Gasoline/kerosene
- Lighter fluid
- Lime
- Lye
- Mothballs/moth cakes
- Paint remover/thinner
- Pesticides/insecticides
- Turpentine
- Weed killers

## MISCELLANEOUS

- Alcohol beverages
- Cigarettes

## OUTDOOR PLANTS

- China Berry
- Oleander
- Texas Mountain Laurel
- Yellow Oleander

Poison Control #: 1-800-222-1222

# Poisonous Plants

Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222

Plants can be dangerous. Some indoor and outdoor plants can cause medical problems. The poisonous effects of these plants vary from a mild irritation of the mouth or skin to serious reactions. Know your plants and if you feel that a poisoning has occurred:

- 1) Don't Panic! Usually, a large amount of a poisonous plant must be eaten to cause severe symptoms and hospitalizations are rare.
- 2) Remove any of the remaining plant from the mouth.
- 3) Wash around the mouth and the hands.
- 4) Call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222
- 5) Follow the nurse's instructions.

## House Plants

Caladium-Leaves  
Crown of Thorns-All parts  
Dieffenbachia/Dumbcane- All parts/sap  
Flowering Bulbs- Bulbs  
Amaryllis/Crocus/Daffodil  
Hyacinth/Paperwhites  
Lily of the Valley- All parts  
Pothos- Leaves  
Philodendron- Leaves  
Schefflera- Leaves



Dieffenbachia

## Ornamental Plants, Shrubs and Trees

Azalea-All parts  
Calla Lily- All parts  
Castor Bean-Bean  
Carolina/Yellow Jasmine (Jessamine)-  
All parts  
Century Plant-Sap  
Chinaberry Tree-Fruits (round green or  
yellow berries)  
English Ivy-Leaves  
Fox Glove- Leaves/seeds  
Iris (Blue Flag)- Leaves and root stalks  
Lantana- Berries (unripe)  
Larkspur- young plants/seeds  
Mexican Bird of Paradise- Seeds pods  
Morning Glory - Seeds  
Oleander (common) - All parts  
Rhododendron - Leaves  
Star Jasmine - Leaves  
Sweet Pea - Seeds (large amounts)  
Texas Mountain Laurel - Mescal Bean  
"burn or sting bean"  
Wisteria- Seeds/pods  
Yellow Oleander Fruit "luck Nut"

## Garden Plants

Apple Tree– Seeds (large amounts)  
Apricot Tree– Kernels (large amounts)  
Peach Tree– Kernels (large amounts)  
Potato– Foliage, green parts of the vegetable  
Rhubarb– Cooked Leaves (large amounts)  
Tomato– Vines

## Wild Plants, Shrubs, Trees

Indian Tobacco– Leaf  
Jimson Weed/Sacred Datura– All parts/seeds  
Locoweed– All parts  
Lupine– All Parts  
Milkweed– All Parts  
Poison Hemlock– All parts  
Poison Ivy/Oak– Leaves  
Tree Tobacco– All parts  
Water Hemlock– All parts  
Wild Mushrooms– All parts  
(Unless you are very sure of they type of mushroom)

## Jewelry From Poisonous Plants

Castor Bean  
Chinaberry  
Jequirity Pea



Jimson Weed

## A Sampling of Non-Poisonous Plants

Asparagus Fern  
African Violet  
Boston Fern  
Coleus  
Dandelion  
Dracaena  
Impatiens  
Jade Plant  
Marigold  
Orchids  
Peperomia  
Petunia  
Poinsettia\*  
Prayer Plant  
Purple Passion Vine  
Rose  
Rubber Plant\*  
Snake Plant  
Spider Plant  
Swedish Ivy  
Wandering Jew  
Wax Plant  
Yucca  
Zebra Plant  
Zinnia

\*Sap of this plant may cause skin irritation.

# First Aid for Poisoning

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The Poison Control Center #:1-800-222-1222

When you call the Center, a nurse will help you determine how serious the poisoning is and will then determine what first aid measures should be taken. If the poisoning can be handled at home, the nurse will call back on a regular basis to follow-up and determine if any additional medical care is needed.

## ***Swallowed Poison...***

- ◆ Medicines, Household Products, Plants, Automotive Products

Remove any remaining “poison” from the mouth. Do NOT give anything by mouth until you have called the poison center.

Call the Poison Center and follow the nurse’s instructions. Try to identify the product or type of poison, the amount and when it was swallowed. Knowing the weight of a young child is helpful. If instructed by the Poison Center, be prepared to take the victim to the Emergency Department. For more serious problems the nurse may request paramedics be sent to your location.

## ***Inhaled Poison...***

- ◆ Gases or Vapors

Immediately get the person to fresh air. Avoid breathing fumes.

Call the Poison Center and follow their instructions.

Open doors and windows wide.

If victim is not breathing, start rescue breathing and have someone call 911.

## ***Poison on the Skin...***

- ◆ Chemicals

Remove contaminated clothing, jewelry or anything that may have come in contact with the chemical or plant. Flood skin with lukewarm water for at least 15 minutes.

Then wash gently with soap and water and rinse. Call the Poison Center for additional information.

## ***Poison in the Eye...***

- ◆ Household Products, Cosmetics

Flood the eye with lukewarm (not hot) water poured from a large glass 2 to 3 inches from the eye. Repeat for 15 minutes. Have the patient blink as much as possible while flooding the eye. Do not force the eyelid open. A shower is the best option for young children.

## ***Bites or Stings...***

- ◆ Bees, Rattlesnakes, Scorpions, Spiders

**Bee Sting:** Remove the stinger by scraping the area with a credit card or similar object to remove the stinger without squeezing more poison into the skin. Call the Poison Center if history of allergy.

**Rattlesnake Bite:** Seek medical help immediately.

Do NOT wait for symptoms to occur.

Do NOT cut, suck, shock or apply a constricting band or tourniquet.

Do not try to catch the snake to bring with you!

The type of rattlesnake makes no difference in the treatment of the bite.

**Scorpion Sting:** Call the poison Center and follow the nurse’s instructions.

**Spider Bites:** Call the Poison Center and follow the nurse’s instructions.

## **Where do poisonings happen?**

- ◆ Anywhere in the home, but most often in the kitchen and bathroom.
- ◆ Outside storage rooms, sheds and garages also contain many poisonous products.
- ◆ The child may hide to secretly eat something poisonous.

## **What can a baby-sitter do?**

- ◆ Children can move fast and climb to places where the parents have stored the medicines and cleaners.  
Never leave children under three alone.
- ◆ If you find something that could be dangerous to the child, put it out of reach and tell the parents when they get home what you moved and where you put it.
- ◆ Know where the emergency numbers are located.
- ◆ Check that the Poison Center number is listed.
- ◆ Be sure you have the number where the parents can be reached.

## **What if a poisoning happens?**

- ◆ Don't Panic!
- ◆ Call the Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222
- ◆ If you think something has been swallowed, bring the bottle of container to the phone with you.
- ◆ Keep the poisoned child within sight. The nurse from the Poison Center will ask you questions about the child. (Does the child look sick, sleepy or super active?)
- ◆ If the poison is in the air first get all the people out of the house to fresh air. Go to a neighbor's house to call the Poison Control Center.
- ◆ Follow the Poison Control Center Nurse's instructions.