

Babies are fun when they become mobile. But with their new mobility, comes extra worries... There will be falls, scrapes, bruises and bug bites.

Starting with Prevention

It's impossible to prevent every accident. You can't be there to stop every bump or bruise. It is also important for them to grow and learn, meaning you will have to let go a little. Resulting in an occasional scrape, pinch, and bump. **It's not a parenting failure**, but our job is to prevent **life-altering** events, such as serious head injuries, burns, drownings, and other major injuries. The best way to prevent the serious accidents is by taking some basic precautions.

1. **Supervise** - when your baby is awake and active, **watch them**
2. **Protect** - if you have to leave the room temporarily, place your baby in a playpen, swing, or crib
3. **Safeguard** - **don't place baby on any soft, unstable surfaces** or close to edges where she can tumble off
4. **Educate** - place your baby on their back to sleep in a crib free of blankets, toys, stuffed animals, pillows, and bumper guards
5. **Childproof** - check the floors and surfaces to remove any choking hazards
6. **Learn** - take **CPR and first aid** classes
7. **Prepare** - have a good first aid kit on hand that includes
 - Bandages
 - Wipes
 - Antibiotic ointment
 - Hand sanitizer
 - Baby digital thermometer
 - Age-appropriate pain and fever reliever
 - Anti-itch cream
 - Medicine dropper
 - And bulb syringe

In Case of An Emergency¹

- Stay calm- you can't help your baby if you aren't calm
- Start CPR if your baby isn't breathing or becomes unresponsive
- When calling 911 or your local emergency service, use your cell phone on speaker so you can continue to attend to your child while speaking with the responder
- Apply continuous pressure to a wound that is bleeding until help arrives
- Place your child on the floor with their head and body turned to the side if they are having a seizure
- Don't move your child if you suspect a head, neck, or spine injury
- Stay with your child until help arrives

Various Infant Accidents

Falls: Once your baby begins rolling over, falls become more possible. They also naturally wiggle, push and reach for things, which makes falling more likely.

- Move the **changing pad to the floor** once they begin rolling over
- Don't leave your baby alone on beds, sofas, chairs, or anything else they could tumble off
- Install gates at stairs once your baby begins to crawl
- Lock up or move cleaning and other dangerous chemicals
- Don't use baby walkers- they are dangerous around stairs, steps, and pools

Cuts and Abrasions²: It's inevitable that your baby will get a cut or scrape. Most will only need to be cleaned up with a little soap and water, some antibiotic ointment, and covered loosely with a colorful Band-Aid or gauze. However, a trip to the ER may be necessary in situations where stitches may be necessary:

- Cuts go all the way through the skin.
- If they are deep enough to expose muscle or fat.
- Any cut that is gaping.

Burns/Scalds³: Crawling babies can pull down cords to hot curling or straightening irons, grab hot drinks or pan handles that are within reach. ***Never carry your baby and hot liquids at the same time*** and keep your water heater adjusted to no more than 120 degrees.

Choking & Suffocation³: Babies put EVERYTHING in their mouths. So, you should be prepared to help them if they choke. Remember, start by eliminating as many choking hazards as you can. Sweep the floor for small items and never feed your baby hard or perfectly round pieces of food such as raw carrots, hot dogs, grapes, popcorn, or hard candy. *If your baby begins choking and is coughing hard or has a strong cry, do not provide first aid right away.* He may be able to push the object out by coughing. Signs of choking in an infant include:

- A panicked look
- They can't make noise.
- Their skin turns blue⁴

Remember, ***never blindly sweep your finger into your baby's mouth.*** This could actually push the object farther into the airway. Only attempt to remove an object if you see it clearly in their mouth⁵.

Poisoning: Little crawlers can quickly open cupboards and get into poisons. If you know or suspect your child has swallowed a poison, call the national poison help line immediately at **800-222-1222**. ***Keep this number in an easy to find area***, like on your refrigerator. They are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and they will tell you what to do and whether your baby should be taken to the emergency room.

Insect bites and stings⁶: Mosquitoes, bees, ants, ticks, and other biting and stinging bugs can cause itchy or irritating bumps on your baby's skin. When this happens, wash the area well with soap and water and apply a cool compress for up to 15 minutes every hour. If there is persistent itching, a topical anti-itch cream can be applied. Infant pain relievers can also be used if needed.

Wrap Up

Accidents happen, and it's heartbreaking to watch our children suffer when they're hurt. But having some accidents is just part of life. Take some simple precautions, supervise your children at all times, keep them as comfortable as possible when they're hurt, and see your medical provider any time you are concerned. You can do this!

References works:

- ¹"When Your Child Needs Emergency Medical Services." HealthyChildren.org, American Academy of Pediatrics, 24 Sept. 2019, www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/injuries-emergencies/Pages/When-Your-Child-Needs-Emergency-Medical-Services.aspx, Accessed on 4 August 2021.
- ²"Cuts, Scrapes & Scar Management." HealthyChildren.org, American Academy of Pediatrics, 14 May 2019, www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/injuries-emergencies/Pages/Treating-Cuts.aspx, Accessed on 4 August 2021.
- ³"Safety for Your Child: Birth to 6 Months." HealthyChildren.org, American Academy of Pediatrics, 18 Dec. 2017, www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/Pages/Safety-for-Your-Child-Birth-to-6-Months.aspx.
⁴<http://www.whattoexpect.com/toddler/childhood-injuries/first-aid-for-a-choking-child.aspx>, Accessed on 4 August 2021.
- ⁵"First Aid Steps for Choking in Children - CHOKING Rescue Procedure Heimlich Maneuver." WebMD, WebMD, 5 Nov. 2019, www.webmd.com/first-aid/choking-in-children, Accessed 4 August 2021.
- ⁶Dr. Glenda William, PhD, Hash, Kimberley, Interviewer, Accessed on: 8, April, 2021.