



Childproofing Your Home

Children are naturally curious and love to explore. Young children especially like to explore by putting things in their mouths. Before or as soon as children begin crawling or walking, parents and caregivers need to take extra steps to make sure harmful items are out of reach, out of sight, and locked up if possible.

Take a moment to check each room in your home using the Safety Checklist in this publication.

Place a check in the first column next to the item if it is STORED OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN.

Place a check in the second column next to the item if it is STORED IN A LOCKED CABINET WITH A SAFETY LATCH.

Also keep in mind that children may get into trash containers. Trash containers that contain spoiled food, sharp objects (like discarded razor blades), or batteries should have a child-resistant cover or be kept out of a child's reach. Purses and other bags that hold potential hazards, including medicines, should be kept out of a child's reach too.

Important Reminders

Most poisonings occur when parents or caregivers are home but not paying attention.

- Keep products in original packaging.
- Store in locked cabinets or containers, out of sight and reach of children.
- Install a safety latch that locks when you close the door on child-accessible cabinets.

Detergent in single-use laundry packets is very concentrated and can be toxic. Even a small amount of the detergent can cause serious breathing or stomach problems or eye irritation.

- Never let your children handle or play with the packets. The packets dissolve quickly when in contact with water, wet hands, or saliva. Biting a packet can cause it to burst, shooting detergent into the child's mouth and throat or eyes.
- Remember to seal the container and store it in a locked cabinet after each use. Make sure the container is out of sight and reach of children.
- Adults should follow the instructions on the product label.

Small objects can be choking hazards or harmful if swallowed.

- Check your floors regularly for small objects. This is particularly important if someone in the household has a hobby that involves small items or if there are older children who have small items.
- Make sure battery covers are secure on remote controls, key fobs, musical books, and greeting cards. Store devices that contain small button batteries out of sight and reach of children. Button batteries can cause severe injury or death if ingested.

Safety Checklist

Check your home for...	Stored out of reach of children	Stored in a locked cabinet with a safety latch
Cleaning products including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All-purpose cleaners • Bleach • Dishwashing detergent (liquid, powdered, or single-use packets or tablets) • Drain openers and toilet bowl cleaners • Furniture polish • Laundry detergent (liquid, powdered, or single-use packets or tablets) 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Personal and hygiene products including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nail polish removers • Cosmetics • Mouthwash • Perfume and aftershave 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Items that may be stored in your basement or garage including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antifreeze and windshield wiper fluid • Gasoline, kerosene, and lamp oil • Insecticides and weed killer 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Medicines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescription medicines • Over-the-counter medicines • Vitamins and supplements 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Houseplants Certain houseplants may be harmful. Call Poison Help at 1-800-222-1222 for a list or description of plants to avoid. You may want to do without houseplants for a while or, at the very least, keep all houseplants out of reach.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small objects including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beads, buttons, coins • Button batteries • Pins • Refrigerator magnets or products and toys with small or loose magnets • Screws 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Alcohol Alcohol can be very poisonous to a young child. Remember to empty any unfinished drinks right away.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nicotine including e-cigarette refills and cigarettes Liquid nicotine e-cigarette refills can be extremely dangerous, even fatal, for a child. Keep all nicotine products, including traditional cigarettes, out of sight and reach of children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Medicines can be harmful if not taken as directed.

- Purchase and keep medicines in original containers with safety caps.
- Check the label each time you give a child medicine to ensure proper dosage.

From Your Doctor



What to Do in Case of Poisoning

If you find your child with an open or empty container of a dangerous nonfood item, your child may have been poisoned.

1. Stay calm and act quickly.
2. Get the item away from your child. If there is still some in your child's mouth, make your child spit it out or remove it with your fingers. Keep this material along with anything else that might help determine what your child swallowed.
3. Do not make your child vomit because it may cause more damage.

If your child is unconscious, not breathing, or having convulsions or seizures, call 911 or your local emergency number right away.

If your child does not have these symptoms, call Poison Help at 1-800-222-1222. You may be asked for the following information:

- Your name and phone number
- Your child's name, age, and weight
- Any medical conditions your child has
- Any medicine your child is taking
- The name of the item your child swallowed
- The time your child swallowed the item (or when you found your child), and the amount you think was swallowed

If the poison is very dangerous, or if your child is very young, you may be told to take your child to the nearest hospital. If your child is not in danger, the Poison Help staff will tell you what to do to help your child at home.

American Academy of Pediatrics

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