



**EMPLOYEE HEALTH INITIATIVE:
HOME SAFETY**

Prevent Child Injuries during Home Safety Month



During Home Safety Month—and all year—take some simple hands-on steps to make your home safer. You can protect the ones you love by preventing child injuries at home.

Show your support for keeping children safe from leading causes of injuries—including burns, drowning, falls, poisoning, motor vehicle crashes, and sports!

Protect the Ones You Love

More than 9 million children between birth and age 19 are seen for injuries each year in U.S. emergency departments, and injuries are the leading cause of death among children in this age group. Home Safety Month is an ideal time to learn about the top causes of child injury and the steps you can take to prevent them.

BURN SAFETY – THE REALITY

Burns



We all want to keep our children safe and secure and help them live to their full potential. Knowing how to prevent leading causes of child injury, like burns, is a step toward this goal. Every day, 435 children ages 0 to 19 are treated in emergency rooms for burn-related injuries and two children die as a result of being burned. Younger children are more likely to sustain injuries from scald burns that are caused by hot liquids or steam, while older children are more likely to sustain injuries from flame burns that are caused by direct contact with fire. Thankfully, there are ways you can help protect the children you love from burns.

Prevention Tips

To prevent burns from fires:

- ☑ **Be alarmed.** Install and maintain smoke alarms in your home—on every floor and near all rooms family members sleep in. Test your smoke alarms once a month to make sure they are working properly.
- ☑ **Have an escape plan.** Create and practice a family fire escape plan, and involve kids in the planning. Make sure everyone knows at least two ways out of every room and identify a central meeting place outside.
- ☑ **Cook with care.** Use safe cooking practices, such as never leaving food unattended on the stove. Also, supervise young children whenever they're near cooking surfaces.

To prevent burns from scalding water:

- ☑ **Check water heater temperature.** Set your water heater's thermostat to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or lower. Infants who aren't walking yet can't get out of water that may be too hot, and maintaining a constant thermostat setting can help control the water temperature throughout your home—preventing it from getting too high.

DROWNINGS – THE REALITY

Drownings



When most of us are enjoying time at the pool or beach, injuries aren't the first thing on our minds. Yet, drownings are the leading cause of injury death for young children ages 1 to 4, and three children die every day as a result of drowning. Thankfully, parents can play a key role in protecting the children they love from drowning.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE OFFICE OF HEALTH SERVICES

Prevention Tips

Fence it off. Install a four-sided isolation fence, with self-closing and self-latching gates, around backyard swimming pools. This can help keep children away from the area when a parent cannot supervise them. Pool fences should completely separate the house and play area from the pool.

Make life jackets a "must." Make sure kids wear life jackets in and around natural bodies of water, such as lakes or the ocean, even if they know how to swim.

Learn CPR. Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and get recertified every two years. CPR can help a child stay alive with little or no brain damage.

Be on the look out. Supervise young children at all times around bathtubs, swimming pools, and natural bodies of water. Adults watching kids near water should avoid distracting activities like playing cards, reading books, or talking on the phone.

FALLS – THE REALITY

Falls



Falls are the leading cause of non-fatal injuries for all children ages 0 to 19. Every day, approximately 8,000 children are treated in U.S. emergency rooms for fall-related injuries. This adds up to almost 2.8 million children each year.

Thankfully, many falls can be prevented, and parents and caregivers can play a key role in protecting children.

Prevention Tips

Play safely. Check to make sure playground equipment your child uses is properly designed and maintained and there's a safe, soft landing surface below.

Make home safety improvements. Use home safety devices, such as guards on windows that are above ground level, stair gates, and guard rails. These devices can help keep a busy, active child from taking a dangerous tumble.

Keep sports safe. Make sure your child wears protective gear when playing active sports, such as wrist guards, knee and elbow pads, and a helmet when in-line skating.

Supervision is key. Supervise young children at all times around fall hazards, such as stairs and playground equipment, whether you're at home or out to play.

POISONINGS – THE REALITY

Poisonings



Every day, 374 children in the United States ages 0 to 19 are treated in an emergency department, and two children die, as a result of being poisoned. It's not just chemicals in your home marked with clear warning labels that can be dangerous to children.

Everyday items in your home, such as household cleaners and medicines, can be poisonous to children as well. Active, curious children will often investigate—and sometimes try to eat or drink—anything that's left out and within their reach. Thankfully, there are ways you can help poison-proof your home and protect the children you love.

Prevention Tips

Lock them up. Keep medicines and toxic products, such cleaning solutions, in locked or childproof cabinets.

Know the number. Put the nationwide poison control center phone number, 1-800-222-1222, on or near every telephone in your home. You should also program it into your cellular phone. You can reach poison control centers 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call poison control if you think a child has been poisoned and if they are awake and alert. Call 911 if you have a poison emergency and your child has collapsed or is not breathing.

Read the label. Follow label directions and read all warnings when giving medicines to children.

Don't keep it if you don't need it. Safely dispose of unused, unneeded, or expired prescription drugs. Be aware that if you dispose of unused medicines, they can be mixed with coffee grounds or kitty litter to make them less appealing to children.



BARBECUE BASICS: TIPS TO PREVENT FOODBORNE ILLNESS

It's the season for picnics, cookouts, and other outdoor parties. But eating outdoors in warm weather presents a food safety challenge. Bacteria in food multiply faster at temperatures between 40°F and 140°F, so summer heat makes the basics of food safety especially important.

"Fortunately, there are a lot of steps consumers can take to keep family and friends from becoming ill," says Marjorie Davidson, Ph.D., education team leader in FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition.

Wash hands.

It seems basic, but not everyone does it.

- ☑ Wash hands well and often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the bathroom and before cooking or eating.
- ☑ If you're in an outdoor setting with no bathroom, use a water jug, some soap, and paper towels.
- ☑ Consider carrying moist disposable towelettes for cleaning your hands.

Keep raw food separate from cooked food.

Don't use a plate that previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood for anything else unless the plate has first been washed in hot, soapy water. Keep utensils and surfaces clean.

Marinate food in the refrigerator, not out on the counter.

And if you want to use some of the marinade as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve a separate portion. Don't reuse marinade that contained raw meat.

Cook food thoroughly.

To kill any harmful bacteria that may be present, use a food thermometer. Hamburgers should be cooked to 160°F. If a thermometer is not available, make sure hamburgers are brown all the way through, not pink. Chicken should be cooked to at least 165°F.

If you partially cook food in the microwave, oven or stove to reduce grilling time, do so immediately before the food goes on the hot grill.

Refrigerate and freeze food promptly.

It can be hard to remember while a party is going on, but food should not be left out of the cooler or off the grill for more than two hours. Never leave food out for more than one hour when the temperature is above 90°F.

Keep hot food hot.

- ☑ Hot food should be kept at or above 140°F. Hot food should be wrapped well and placed in an insulated container.
- ☑ If bringing hot take-out food such as fried chicken or barbecue to an outdoor party, eat it within two hours of purchase.
- ☑ In addition to bringing a grill and fuel for cooking to an outdoor location, remember to pack a food thermometer to check that your meat and poultry reach a safe internal temperature.
- ☑ When re-heating food at the outing, be sure it reaches 165°F.

Keep cold food cold.

Cold food should be held at or below 40°F. Foods like chicken salad and desserts that are in individual serving dishes can be placed directly on ice or in a shallow container set in a deep pan filled with ice. Drain off water as ice melts and replace ice frequently.





START AT THE STORE: 7 WAYS TO PREVENT FOOD BORNE ILLNESS

Safeguarding your home against foodborne illnesses begins not at home, but at the supermarket, grocery store, or any other place where you buy food that you plan to store and serve. Combating foodborne illnesses is a top priority at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). That's because, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), foodborne ailments cause about 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,200 deaths nationwide each year. You as a consumer can play a key role in preventing these illnesses.

While shopping for food, you should:

[Check for cleanliness](#)

Buying from a retailer who follows proper food handling practices helps assure that the food is safe. Ask yourself: What is the general impression of this facility? Does it look and smell clean?

[Keep certain foods separated](#)

Separate raw meat, poultry, and seafood from other foods in your grocery shopping cart. Place these foods in plastic bags to prevent their juices from dripping on other foods. It is also best to separate these foods from other foods at checkout and in your grocery bags.

[Inspect cans and jars](#)

Don't buy food in cans that are bulging or dented. Also, don't buy food in jars that are cracked or have loose or bulging lids. Since foods sold in cans or jars are processed to be sterile, they can "keep" for a long time if the can or jar is intact. A bulging can or jar lid may mean the food was under-processed and is contaminated. A dent in a can, especially if the dent affects a seam, may cause an opening in the seam which may allow contamination, as would a crack in a jar. A loose lid on a jar means the vacuum has been lost and the product may be contaminated. Don't buy a food product whose seal seems tampered with or damaged.

[Inspect frozen food packaging](#)

Don't buy frozen food if the package is damaged. Packages should not be open, torn or crushed on the edges. Also, avoid packages that are above the frost line in the store's freezer. If the package cover is transparent, look for signs of frost or ice crystals. This could mean that the food in the package has either been stored for a long time or thawed and refrozen. In such cases, choose another package.

[Select frozen foods and perishables last](#)

Meat, poultry, fish and eggs should be the last items placed in your shopping cart. Always put these products in separate plastic bags so that drippings don't contaminate other foods.

[Choose fresh eggs carefully](#)

Before putting eggs in your cart, open the carton and make sure that the eggs are clean and none is cracked. Buy only refrigerated eggs and follow the "Safe Handling Instructions" on the carton.

[Be mindful of time and temperature](#)

It's important to refrigerate perishable products as soon as possible after grocery shopping. Food safety experts stress the "2-hour rule"—because harmful bacteria can multiply in the "danger zone" (between 40° and 140° F), perishable foods should not be left at room temperature longer than 2 hours. Modify that rule to 1 hour when temperatures are above 90° F, as they often are in cars that have been parked in the sun.

If it will take more than an hour to get your groceries home, use an ice chest to keep frozen and perishable foods cold. Also, when the weather is warm and you are using your car's air conditioner, keep your groceries in the passenger compartment, not the trunk.

For the sources for this article and more information about Home Safety please visit the following Web sites:

- [CDC Childhood Injury Report: Patterns of Unintentional Injuries among 0-19 Year Olds in the United States, 2000-2006](#)
- [CDC: Protect the Ones You Love Web site](#)
- [CDC Healthy Homes Web site](#)

