



SAFETY TIPS TO PREVENT

Choking



*A Program to Help Keep Children
Safe and Injury-Free.*

Sponsored & Made Possible By:

Overwatea Foods

Partnering with B.C.'s Children's Hospital
since 1988

SAFETY TIPS TO *Prevent Choking*

Here are some objects that can cause children to choke:

- large pieces of food (such as pieces of hot dogs, fruits, or vegetables)
- bones
- candies
- gum
- nuts
- small household items (such as earrings, batteries, keys, buttons)
- balloons
- coins
- pieces of toys



Food Safety

- Grate hard fruits and vegetables (such as carrots and apples).
- Cut softer fruits and vegetables into small pieces (such as grapes and cherries).
- Remove all bones from food (such as chicken).
- Cut hot dogs into long thin strips, and then cut those strips into small pieces. If pieces of hot dog are too big, they can plug your child's airway.
- Do not give nuts, popcorn, gum, or hard candy to children under 4.





Know what to do in an emergency

Learn first aid to help a baby or child who is choking and teach older children who to call.

Pacifiers

Check pacifiers regularly. Make sure the nipple part is firmly attached to the handle. If it is not, the soft part could come off, causing your baby to choke. Throw out the pacifier when the nipple part has cracks or when it becomes sticky.

When your baby starts teething, do not let him or her chew on the pacifier. Give your baby a teething ring instead.

Do not attach strings or cords to a pacifier.

Balloons

Do not use latex balloons as toys. Balloons or pieces of popped balloon can cause choking. Use foil balloons instead.

If you do allow your child to play with balloons, supervise him or her closely. Do not let your child put balloons or balloon pieces in his or her mouth.

Older Children can help

Teach older children to keep small toys and pieces of toys away from babies, toddlers, and young children.

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DID YOU KNOW ...

- When a toy has a label that says **Not suitable for children under 3**, this means that there may be small parts that could cause choking.
- Even if you think your child is ready to play with the toy, do not give it to him or her until age 3.



Safety Check

- Do not give foods such as nuts, popcorn, gum, and hard candy to children under 4.
- Cut foods into small pieces before you give them to your child. (See other two pages for some examples.)
- Keep coins, buttons, batteries, keys, earrings, and other small objects where your child cannot reach them.
- Teach children to stay sitting and be calm while they are eating. They will be less likely to choke on their food.
- Check toys and children's equipment (such as the crib) for small pieces that might come off.

Babies, toddlers, and young children can choke if food or small objects stick in their throats and block their breathing.

Babies can choke because they have undeveloped throat muscles and small airways. Toddlers are at risk because they like to put things in their mouths. They do not have all their teeth and cannot chew large pieces of food.



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Safety Tips are a series of fact sheets about children under 5 produced by Safe Start, the injury prevention program of BC's Children's Hospital, in co-operation with Save-On-Foods, Overwatea Foods, Safe Kids Canada, and the Canadian Institute of Child Health. For more information, contact Safe Start at (604) 875-3273 or online at www.cw.bc.ca/safestart or visit www.safekidscanada.ca. These Safety Tips may be photocopied, but only in their original format. *Produced 2003.*

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