

## Injury Prevention for Kids and Seniors

The tragedy of injury is that most of the resulting deaths, disabilities and disfigurements need not happen at all. With injury, there is a direct connection between prevention and outcome. Many injuries can be prevented entirely or, certainly, their severity can be lessened.

By nearly every measure, injury ranks as one of our most pressing health problems. It is the leading cause of death and disability for our children and young adults, and undermines the lives of minorities and the elderly. Although the greatest cost of injury is in human suffering and loss, the financial cost is staggering as well both in health care dollars and in losses to society. Despite these great costs, it is only within the past decade that the injury problem has been accorded sufficient national and state attention to make a lasting difference.

### Bike Safety

Riding a bike can be a lot of fun! But just like your parents who have to be careful and obey the rules when they're driving a car, there are rules you need to follow when you ride your bike on the road. It's easy to fall off a bike and get hurt, especially if you don't know the rules of the road or your bike isn't working right.

- Always wear a helmet that fits your head - not too big or too small.
- Wear the helmet flat on your head.
- Before you ride your bike, make sure it is safe and working right. Ask an adult to check your bike for safety, especially if your bike has been in a crash.
- Test your brakes.
- Make sure the handlebars are straight and there's enough air in the tires.
- If you fall off your bike, tell an adult right away. You might not know that you're hurt.
- Be sure to follow the Rules of the Road:
- Make sure you know and obey all traffic laws.
- Always ride on the right side of the road.
- Use proper hand signals to let others know that you are turning.
- Look both ways before crossing the street with your bicycle. Walk, don't ride,

your bike across the street.

- Never ride in between parked or moving cars.
- When riding through a curve, ride in single file, slow down and stay to the side of the road.
- Never ride out from a driveway or hillside.

### **Choosing A Booster Seat**

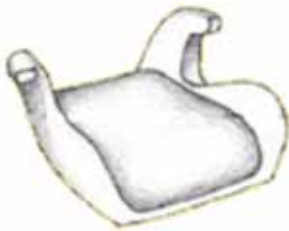
Booster seats come in a variety of styles, sizes, and prices. There are different types to fit the needs of your car and there are different types to fit the needs of your growing child. The important thing is to find a booster seat that fits your child right.

#### **The Basics:**

- You need to have a lap and shoulder belt to use a booster seat.
- Your child needs to be over 40 pounds to use a booster seat.
- Your child's head always needs to be protected against whiplash. Make sure the booster seat or your car's headrest comes up above his ears when he is using the booster seat.
- A higher price does not mean the seat is safer or fits better.

#### **Types of Booster Seats:**

There are 3 types of booster seats that protect children in car crashes. You should always follow your booster seat manufacturer's instructions for each seat. Pay attention to the weight limits listed on the seat label.



#### **No Back Booster Seat:**

- Must be used with a lap and shoulder belt.
- Your car's seats need to have headrests that come above your child's ears when she is sitting in a no-back booster seat.
- No-back booster seats are easy to pack up and move from one car to another.

### High Back Booster Seat:

- Must be used with a lap and shoulder belt.
- A high-back booster protects against whiplash in cars with low-seatbacks.
- It can be used in cars with or without headrests.
- A high-back booster can be comfortable for a child who likes to nap in the car.



### Forward-Facing Seat with Harness or Combination Seat:

- This seat combines a car seat with a booster seat. It allows your child to use the same seat as she grows up.
- If your child is between 20-40 pounds, attach the safety seat to your car's seat with the seat belt and buckle your child in with the harness.
- When your child weighs 40 pounds (or the upper weight limit for the harness), remove the harness and detach the safety seat from the car's seat. Now, you have a high-back booster seat!
- Use the lap and shoulder seat belt to buckle your child in safely.
- This type of booster seat can be used in cars with or without headrests

### Find a Seat for Your Child:

There are different seats for different types of cars and children. To choose the booster seat that keeps your child the safest, you need to think about the size of your child, how she likes to ride, and what features are in your car.

### Seats for Children with Special Needs:

Some children may require a special safety seat to be protected in the car. Talk with your child's doctor about the best type of seat for his needs. The American Academy of Pediatrics also has information about the different types of seats available. For more data, please visit the: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; the National SAFE KIDS Coalition; or the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia .

### Booster Seats to Avoid:

Some seats are not recommended by doctors and safety experts.

### Shield Booster Seats:



- Using the shield portion of this booster seat is no longer recommended. It may cause injury during a car crash.
- If the shield can come off, take it off. (Check the seat's instruction book.)  
Now, you have a no-back booster seat!
- Use the seat without the shield by buckling your child in with the lap and shoulder belt.
- Your car's seats need to have headrests that come above your child's ears when she is sitting in a no-back booster seat.
- If the shield cannot come off, do NOT use this seat.

### Recalled or Secondhand Seats:

We do not recommend using secondhand seats, as they may have been in a crash or may have been damaged and you may not be able to see the damage. Do not use a booster seat unless you know its history.

## **Fall Prevention**

Lots of the kids go to the hospital because they got hurt from falling. To prevent this from happening to you, remember the following:

- Don't try to get something that's out of your reach by climbing on a chair or table. Ask an adult to get it for you.
- Always sit in the tub when you're getting a bath.
- Never walk in the house where it's dark.
- Always pick up your toys so no one trips over them.
- Never open a window by yourself.
- Don't sit or stand anywhere that's high off the ground.
- Don't run or jump in the house.
- Use the railing when you walk up and down steps, and never slide down the railing.
- Don't jump on beds or sofas.
- Always keep your shoes tied.
- Don't try to carry too many things at once.

## **Kids In Cars**

Riding in a car usually means you're going someplace fun, like the playground or your grandparents' house. But sometimes cars can wreck, and kids can get hurt. That's why you should be as safe as you can.

Here are some tips to follow so this doesn't happen to you.

- Always wear a seat belt.
- Sit in a child's safety seat until your parent or guardian says you don't have to anymore.
- Sit in the back seat until you're at least 13 years old.
- Never open the door when a car is moving.
- Don't leave the car until the driver says it's safe.

## **Scooters, Skates & Boards**

Riding on scooters, skateboards and in-line skates can be a lot of fun, but you need to be careful so you don't get hurt. Follow the safety tips below so you can have fun and be safe at the same time.

### Safety Tips:

- Make sure your scooter, skateboard or in-line skates are safe. Have your parents check them before you ride.
- Always wear safety gear, including a helmet, knee and elbow pads and wrist guards.
- Learn how to control your speed, turn and stop.
- Ride or skate only on smooth, dry surfaces. Avoid riding or skating on gravel, sand, dirt or other bumpy surfaces or on wet or oily surfaces.
- Do not ride or skate in the street or on busy sidewalks.
- Wear bright clothing so others can see you.
- Always ride or skate on the right hand side or sidewalks, bike paths and trails.
- Always pass people on the left and remember to yell "Passing on the left," before passing.
- Keep your equipment in good condition by checking it often and changing worn wheels and brakes.
- Be careful going downhill. If a hill is steep, walk to the bottom carrying your scooter, skateboard or skates.
- Do not ride or skate at night.
- Obey local signs and laws and ride or skate only where you are allowed.
- Pay attention to what you and others around you are doing at all times.

### If you fall:

- Try to roll in the direction that you are falling.
- Try to land on the softest parts of your body.

### **Street Safety**

Safety is very important when you are near a street. Always remember to follow these rules:

- Learn what traffic signs mean.
- Before crossing a street, stop at the curb or edge of the road and never run into the street.
- Look and listen for cars and trucks to the left, then to the right and then to the left again.
- Cross at the street corner and walk in the painted lines if they have them.
- Keep looking while you cross the street.
- Never walk or run between parked cars.

## Swimming

It's fun to swim, but never swim without an adult around to watch you. Even if you are a great swimmer, it is always best to have an adult around for extra safety.

When you are swimming, keep these tips in mind:

- Never swim during a storm or when there is lightning.
- Never swim alone. Always use the buddy system.
- Swim only in safe, guarded areas.
- Know how deep the water is.
- Don't dive or jump into water that is not at least 12 feet deep.
- Don't run around a pool, push people in or dunk other swimmers.
- Don't chew gum or eat food while swimming, diving or playing in the water.
- Take swimming lessons.
- Be extra careful in the ocean and don't run into the waves, which can knock you down.
- Rivers are very dangerous for swimming. It is best to stay out of them.

## Trampolines

- Trampolines aren't always toys for kids. They can be unsafe.
- If you are not 6 years old, never play on a trampoline.
- If you are 6 and play on a trampoline, make sure an adult is right there with you.
- Never jump with another person. Only one person should jump at a time.
- Always jump in the center of the trampoline.
- Don't do tricks or flips.
- Never jump off. When you are finished jumping, stop, walk to the edge, sit and slide off.
- Never go under a trampoline while someone else is jumping on it.
- Never play on a wet trampoline.

## Preventing Falls and Injury Prevention Among Seniors

For millions of older people, falls present a serious health risk. It is estimated that one of every three persons age 65 and older falls each year. Among older adults, falls are the leading cause of injury deaths and the most common cause of injuries and hospital admissions for trauma.

Fractures are the most serious health consequence of falls. Eighty-seven percent of all fractures among older adults are due to falls. Hundreds of thousands of hip fractures, the most serious fracture, occur each year among people over age 65. Half of all older people hospitalized for hip fractures cannot return home or live independently after their injury.

Many of these falls and resulting injuries can be prevented. Strategies to prevent falls among older adults include exercises to improve strength, balance, and flexibility; reviews of medications that may affect balance; and home modifications that reduce fall hazards such as installing grab bars, improving lighting, and removing items that may cause tripping.