Home safety: Creating a safe home environment

Each year, more children between the ages of 1 and 4 die from unintentional ("accidental") injuries than from all childhood diseases combined.

A majority of injuries occur to children in the home.

Improving the safety of the child's home and providing supervision are keys to preventing injuries.

Use this checklist to ensure your home is ready for a baby:

- Create and practice a fire escape plan with two ways out of every room.

- Install working smoke alarms and CO (carbon monoxide) detectors in every level of your home and in sleeping areas. Test them monthly.

- Test your home for radon gas.

- Set your water heater temperature at 120 degrees. Test water on your forearm before putting children into the tub.

- Put your baby to sleep on his/her back, in a crib without blankets, bumpers or toys.

- Use cordless window products, or cut the cords short, eliminating the loops and tie them up high to keep them out of reach.

- Test toys for small parts. If the toy fits in a toilet paper roll, it's a choking hazard for a toddler.

- Use safety gates at both the tops and bottoms of stairs.

- Use stationary play centers instead of baby walkers with wheels.

- Install window guards or stops on second-story windows, to prevent them from opening more than 4 inches wide.

- Keep furniture away from windows.

- Lock up potential poisons out of children's reach, including cleaning supplies, medicine, vitamins and alcohol.

- Follow label directions when giving medicine to children.

- Never leave a child alone in a bathtub, even for a second.

- Install four-sided fencing around pools and keep covers locked on hot tubs, as required by Oregon law.

For more information

Safety information: Safe Kids Oregon
www.safekidsoregon.org
www.safekids.org

Product recalls:
www.cpsc.gov

Oregon Poison Center
1-800-222-1222

Window falls prevention:
www.stopat4.com