

Safety in the home

More accidents happen in the home than anywhere else. And children under the age of five are some of the most likely to have accidents at home. Children attend A&E or walk-in centres most commonly for accidental poisoning, burns and scalds, and falls. The lounge or living room is the most common place for accidents to happen. Think about stairgates for the bottom of the stairs and room entrances. Keep baby out of the kitchen or in an area where they are safe. Cord blinds should be shortened and tied up away from baby. They are a choking hazard. Continue with safe sleeping, putting your baby to sleep on their backs, not letting them get too hot. Cables need to be tacked or hidden. Plug socket covers are not considered necessary anymore. Corners, door hinges and edges of furniture need to be considered for safety. You may need to remove certain furniture until your baby is older. In the kitchen, we advise moving cleaning fluids to a high cupboard or fitting a child lock on the low cupboards. Make sure there is no dangling flex from your kettle and your kettle is at the back of the worktop. Knives should be in a drawer with a child lock or moved to a higher cupboard out of reach along with any other sharp kitchenware.

Keep hot drinks out of the reach of children. Hot drink scalds can keep burning your child for up to 15 minutes after it's happened. Put any burn under cold running water as soon as possible and keep it under for at least 20 minutes, then seek medical attention. If a scald happens and it starts to blister, cover it with cling film after cooling with running water. This will help keep it clean and stop clothing fibres sticking to it.

Smoke alarms should be fitted and carbon monoxide alarms if you have gas in your house. If you smoke, make sure you keep any smoking materials, lighters and matches in a cupboard high up. Candles should never be left lit in a room unless an adult is present.

Pets must be watched and not left alone with your baby. As your baby is getting more adventurous and active, they are more likely to pull and grab your pet. They're just playing, but your pet may not be tolerant. An adult should be present if pets are in the room or take your baby with you when you go out of it, or shut the pet out of the room when you're leaving the baby. Pets often need timeout from crawling babies and toddlers.

Never leave your baby in water by themselves. They can turn and drown in a couple of minutes. There were four deaths in 2018 in the bath. Also be aware of where children can come into contact with water, paddling pools in the summer, hot tubs and Jacuzzis (at home and on holiday), swimming pools, rivers and lakes.