

Frequently Asked Questions: Safety at Home



Where can I safely put my baby when he or she is not being held?

You can put your baby on a blanket on the floor for tummy time. Playpens and Pack and Plays on the floor are another safe option. You can also use a baby chair, swing or other equipment on the floor. Make sure that the equipment is okay for your baby's age and stage. Always use the safety straps on chairs, seats and swings. Babies should not be left alone on couches, chairs or beds because they could fall.

How can I make sure my baby's crib is safe for sleeping?

Cribs made after 1986 meet today's standards for safety. Check that the bars of the crib are no more than 6 cm (2 3/8 inches) apart. Make sure the mattress fits tightly in the crib. You should not be able to fit more than two fingers between the mattress and crib bars. Always keep side rails on the crib locked in place when your baby is inside. Drop-side cribs are illegal in Canada and should not be used.

Bumper pads should not be used at any age because they can cause a baby to suffocate. Keep pillows, stuffed animals, toys and heavy blankets out of your baby's crib. Do not have soother cords in the crib or around your baby's neck. Always put your baby to sleep in the crib on his or her back.



How can I safely feed my baby?

Information to support feeding your baby can be found in Nova Scotia's Loving Care and Breastfeeding Basics books. For additional information on how to safely prepare, handle and store your baby's milk, speak with your health care provider or see the following links:

<http://novascotia.ca/dhw/lovingcare/>

<http://www.iwk.nshealth.ca> (search PL 0960)



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How do I find out information about toy and baby product recalls?

Recalls can be found at <http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/index-eng.php>. Make sure to send in the registration card, or register your baby equipment online with the manufacturer. This way, if something you own is recalled, the manufacturer can let you know.

How do I know which baby equipment is okay for my baby's age and stage?



Newborn babies have a weak neck and a heavy head, which needs to be supported at all times. As your baby grows older, his or her neck muscles will grow stronger. Certain equipment, such as jolly jumpers and bouncy chairs, should not be used until your baby has stronger neck muscles, and can hold his or her head up.

Baby walkers with wheels are illegal in Canada. Instead, babies who can hold their head up can use a play center like an "exersaucer" that stays in one place.

Always read and follow the manufacturer's instructions and age recommendations for all baby equipment.



How can I safely buy second hand baby gear?

Before buying second hand baby gear, make sure each item has all of its parts and is working well. If anything is missing when you bring it home, you can call the manufacturer for replacement parts, including instructions. Instructions for baby gear may also be found online.

Check for recalls at <http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/index-eng.php>.