handle safely

Babies can easily wriggle into danger. Don’t let it happen to yours.
Every day 185 babies are rushed to hospital as a result of accidents. Most injuries to babies and small children happen in and around the home. Make sure your baby doesn’t become a statistic. Look around your home and garden and take action now to minimise potential hazards.

**falls**

**REMEMBER** Babies under nine months have limited mobility but they can wriggle, kick or roll into hazardous situations. For example, within a few months a baby can roll him or herself off a bed, work surface or changing table.

**ACTION** Don’t leave a baby unattended on any raised surface, even strapped in a car seat on a kitchen surface.

**REMEMBER** Falls and trips are the most frequent cause of injuries amongst young children.

**ACTION** Once a baby is crawling, make sure there is no furniture around that he or she can climb on, especially directly under a window. Use safety gates to stop children climbing stairs or falling down them. Fit window locks or safety catches that stop windows opening more than 6.5cm/2.5in.
Babies will learn to walk in their own time.

**ACTION** CAPT does not recommend using a baby walker. They don't help with a baby's development and they enable babies to move around very quickly and reach things they would not normally be able to, like hot drinks on a table, which can be extremely hazardous. They can also lead to falls down stairs and steps, or even into a fireplace.

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**Burns and Scalds**

**REMEMBER** A baby's skin is delicate and injuries caused by burns and scalds can be horrific.

**ACTION** Always test the temperature of bath water with your elbow. To avoid scalds from your bath's hot tap, have a thermostatic mixing valve (TMV) fitted. If you do not have a thermostatic mixing valve, always put cold water into the bath first, then add hot water. Never leave your baby alone in the bath - even with an older brother or sister, they might turn on the hot tap. In the kitchen, remember to keep hot drinks, food, kettles and pan handles out of reach. Never hold a baby and a hot drink at the same time.

**REMEMBER** Babies reach out for attractive bright colours.

**ACTION** Use an appropriate fire guard for all fires whether they are solid fuel, electric or gas.

**REMEMBER** In the event of a fire, extra seconds can make the difference between life and death.

**ACTION** Fit a smoke alarm on each floor in your home. If you've already got one, check every week that it's working properly. Be prepared – work out a fire escape plan.
**choking**

**REMEMBER** Babies beginning to sit and crawl reach out for objects and often grab anything they can get their hands on to put into their mouths.

**ACTION** Keep objects like coins and small toys out of a baby's reach so that they don't end up in their mouth.

**REMEMBER** Babies choke very easily, even on drinks.

**ACTION** Don't leave a baby alone with a feeding bottle or food.

**strangulation**

**REMEMBER** Babies wriggle a lot so they can easily get caught up in things from which they can't free themselves.

**ACTION** Avoid clothing with dangling drawstrings, ribbons or braces. Also avoid toys with long strings.

**poisoning**

**REMEMBER** From the age of about six to eight months babies put things in their mouths.

**ACTION** Try to make sure you buy cleaning products that include a bittering agent such as Bitrex™. This helps to prevent children swallowing the contents because it makes them taste horrible. Make sure all cleaning products and medicines are properly closed after use and stored out of sight and reach of children. Remember that child-resistant caps are not child-proof.
drowning

**REMEMBER** Babies can drown in a few centimetres of water.

**ACTION** Stay with your baby all the time when he or she is in the bath.

out and about

**REMEMBER** Travelling by car can be dangerous. Minimise the risks by taking the correct steps.

**ACTION** Use a rear-facing baby seat on every journey, however short. **Never use a rear-facing baby seat in the front passenger seat if an air bag is fitted.**

Although you may take active steps to ensure that your baby is safe from accidental injury there may be an occasion when an injury does occur. CAPT advises that you keep emergency numbers by the telephone, learn some basic first aid and keep a first aid kit handy.
Further information or assistance can be obtained by contacting the following people in your local area.

HEALTH VISITOR
advice on health and child safety.

FIRE OFFICER
advice on fire prevention.

ROAD SAFETY OFFICER
advice on road safety.

HOME SAFETY OFFICER
advice on home safety.

Please contact us at the following address if you need further information or advice about children's safety:

Child Accident Prevention Trust
22-26 Farringdon Lane
London EC1R 3AJ
telephone 020 7608 3828
e-mail safe@capt.org.uk
web www.capt.org.uk

Registered Charity Number 1053549
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This leaflet is one of a set of five each covering a different age & stage of a child’s development:

Handle safely: babies from birth to crawling

Active steps to safety: toddlers up to the age of 5

Step safely with a helping hand: children aged 5-7

Step safely from the edge: children aged 7-11

It's a safety thing: young people aged 11-14