

National Falls Prevention Month: Childhood Falls



PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN HEALTH
SANTÉ PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN

Preventing Childhood Falls

We all want infants and children to be active, healthy and safe. Unfortunately, falls sustained in a variety of ways cause many to sustain head injuries, fractures and life-threatening injuries. While some incidents occur despite every precaution being taken, there are circumstances to be aware of that could lead to a fall.

Hazards

- **Furniture:** Whether climbing onto furniture, falling off of it or having it fall on top of them, furniture such as sofas, beds, cribs, high chairs, change tables, counter tops, dressers and television stands all have the potential to lead to injuries. Secure furniture in your child's room and consider a wall-mounted television instead of one on a stand. Never leave an infant on a change table, sofa or adult bed-if you need to get something, place the infant safely in their crib or secure them into their baby seat first.
- **Windows/Doors/Balconies:** Despite taking precautions, reports of children falling out of apartment windows or off balconies still are reported. Always be aware of your child's whereabouts and secure windows and doors. Having no items on your balcony that your child could climb onto is another safety option.
- **Playground Equipment:** While playground equipment is a lot of fun, playground injuries are a leading cause of emergency department visits for children— with major cuts, head injuries and fractures being common. Choose play equipment that is suitable for their age and abilities and be sure to supervise them closely.



Equipment

Safety gear is available for many sports and activities, and should be used when and where it is recommended. Letting your child know they are unable to ride their bike without a helmet helps to save them from a possible concussion or serious head injury if they are involved in an accident. Trampolines are quite hazardous and cause a number of childhood injuries—they should be used with caution.

Slides

Never place a small child on an adult's lap going down a slide. Adults may think it is safer to go down the slide with their toddler in their laps., but this puts the child at risk of a broken lower leg (shin bone). Instead, choose a short slide that is recommended for your child's age and supervise while your child goes down alone.

(Information adapted from the WRHA site "Staying on Your Feet-Taking Steps to Prevent Falls")

Help Prevent Childhood Falls!!