



## Safety in the home - Falls

**Children often fall over as they move around and play but, every day, 45 children under 5-years old are admitted to hospital because their fall is a serious one. Falls are the most common cause of accidents to children.**

### How can falls be prevented?

Often children fall because they are suddenly able to do something that previously they couldn't do, such as roll over or start climbing, and this new ability leads to a fall. It's important for all parents and carers to understand about steps they can take to minimise falls as their child develops from baby to child, and the following section highlights areas in the home to think about:

#### Preventing falls around the home

- As babies and children develop, they want to explore. They are naturally curious and this can mean a baby can wriggle off a raised surface or a toddler wants to climb out of their cot, for example.
- Fit safety catches, locks or window restrictors to windows, and keep keys to windows away from windows but in a safe accessible place. Keep furniture like beds or sofas away from windows and supervise a child on a balcony, never leaving them.
- Keep any bouncing chairs or car seats on the floor.
- Remember that even small babies can wriggle and kick enough to fall off a raised surface.
- Always strap your baby or toddler into the high chair at feeding time. Toddlers soon learn to push themselves out of their seat if they're not strapped in, making it easy for them to topple over.

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**For additional Parent Tips see [www.ihv.org.uk](http://www.ihv.org.uk)**

The information in this resource was updated on 01/06/2022 as part of suite of Parent Tips on safety in the home with support from the Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT) who we thank for the use of their resources.

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# Safety in the home - Falls

- Changing your baby on the floor is the safest way to avoid an accidental fall, but if you'd prefer to use a changing table (or have to use one while out and about) be sure never to leave your baby unattended, even for a moment. Make sure you have your nappies and wipes close to hand. Avoid using other raised surfaces (such as a bed) to change your baby.
  - Fit safety gates to stop your baby getting onto stairs. Close the gates properly after you go through them.
  - Never leave objects such as toys or books on stairs which pose a trip hazard.
  - As your children get older, discourage them from playing on stairs or climbing on bannisters. Remind them to keep the stairs clear of toys, books and other objects.
  - Keep your stairs in good condition, making sure stair coverings are not worn and lacking in grip, and that banisters are secure.
  - Your baby's cot should be positioned well away from the window. Ensure that the base of the cot is adjusted to a low enough position to prevent the child climbing out.
  - Discourage your child from climbing on furniture and make sure heavy objects - such as bookcases and chests of drawers - are secured to the wall so they cannot be pulled over.
  - Take care with garden items such as trampolines and other outdoor play equipment. Trampolines in particular should be viewed with caution, particularly for children under 6 who are most likely to get injured when playing on them. Make sure only one child plays on the trampoline at any time. You can read helpful advice on trampoline safety on the RoSPA website here: <https://bit.ly/3sdkDgi>
  - Make sure your child always wears a helmet when they're riding on their scooter, balance bike or bike.
  - It is great if parents and carers can wear a cycle helmet too - not only to protect themselves, but to set a good example to their children.
- If you have any worries or questions about safety around the home or when on holiday, your health visitor can offer advice which follows current safety guidelines.

## More information:

- **Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT)** - For more information on child safety, visit: <https://bit.ly/3OY43dS>
- **NHS** - Baby and toddler safety: <https://bit.ly/3KFINX2>

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