

Household Safety



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Household Safety



Objectives

- Statistics on household safety
- Common injuries and accidents at home
- Falls
- Poisoning
- Fires and Burns
- Choking
- Environmental Hazards
- Emergency preparedness



Household Safety



Did you know....

- ✓ More accidents happen at home than anywhere else
- ✓ Home accidents are responsible for more fatal injuries than any other cause, second to motor vehicle accidents
- ✓ More than 18,000 Americans die from injuries that occur in the home and 13 million injuries occur every year
- ✓ More than 3.4 million children experience an unintentional household injury every year and 2,300 children under 15 will die from these
- ✓ Children under age 5 and adults over 65 are most likely to have an injury at home
- ✓ The living room is the most dangerous room in the house, not the kitchen as most would think



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Most Common Household Injuries

1. Falls
2. Poisoning
3. Burns

Source: National Safety Council



Falls



- Falls are the 2nd leading cause of accidental or unintentional deaths worldwide, resulting in an estimated 424,000 deaths
- Over 37 million falls are severe enough to require medical attention worldwide
- Falls are more common in older adults (>65 y/o) due to weakness, medications, cluttered living spaces, impaired vision and lighting or young children under age 5
- 1 in 3 older adults fall each year
- Unintentional falls are the number one cause of non-fatal injury for children



Fall Prevention



Falls can be prevented! Take some simple steps to avoid falling or help others !

- Talk to your healthcare provider to evaluate your fall risk, review your medications to see if they cause dizziness or drowsiness and help identify health problems that could lead to falling.
- Try to do exercises that improve strength, flexibility, coordination and balance, Tai Chi is a great example.
- Make sure to have your eyes checked yearly and update your prescription if necessary.
- Wear sensible, properly fitted shoes with sturdy, non-skid soles.
- Make your home safer; remove trip hazards, add grab bars and additional safety items in the bathroom, use railings on both sides of the stairs and have adequate lighting in the home.



Poisoning



- Poison is any substance, including medications, that is harmful to your body if too much is ingested, inhaled, injected or absorbed through the skin, according to the CDC.
- Over 90% of all poisonings occur at home.
- Unintentional poisoning occurs when an individual takes or is given too much of a substance, without intended harm.
- Poisoning can occur from many different items in the home, including cleaners and chemical products and also medications.
- This often occurs when a curious child ingests something they shouldn't or medication dosage errors for children and adults.
- The most common poisoning is from prescription drugs- particularly opioid pain medication.



Poison Prevention



- Everyday products we use in the home can be dangerous if not handled, used and/or stored properly.
 - ✓ **Lock them up and away:** Keep chemicals, medications and any other toxic products in original packaging and out of the reach of children. Secure lids and put items away as soon as you are done with them.
 - ✓ **Know the number:** Keep the poison control number posted for quick reference and also program in your cell phone. They can be reached 24/7, seven days a week. Call only if victim is awake and alert. ***In the US call 1-800-222-1222***
 - ✓ **Read labels:** Follow all label direction/instructions and read all warnings when using products and dispensing medications.
 - ✓ **Don't keep it if you don't need it:** Safely dispose of unused, expired or unneeded medications or products in the home.
 - ✓ **Do not mix household products:** Mixing certain products can result in toxic gases.
 - ✓ **Protect yourself:** Wear gloves and protective clothing when handling chemicals and toxic substances.
 - ✓ **Be sure to have good ventilation:** Open windows and use fans when using cleaners and chemicals.
 - ✓ **Call 911:** Get help immediately if you have a poison emergency and the victim is having difficulty breathing or becomes unconscious, do not waste time calling poison control.



Fires and Burns



- Fires can be caused by things like candles, electrical malfunctions, smoking, cooking and heating equipment and can rage out of control very quickly.
- Burns can range from minor to severe depending on the depth of the burn and amount of the body affected.

Prevention:

- ✓ Be sure that you have working smoke alarms on every level of the home and test the batteries monthly.
- ✓ Keep fire extinguishers nearby and know how to use them.
- ✓ Plan and practice an escape plan in case of a fire, know two ways out of each room.
- ✓ If your clothes catch fire, remember to STOP, DROP and ROLL!
- ✓ If a door handle is hot, do not open the door but try and find another way out.
- ✓ Keep lighters and matches out of the reach of children.
- ✓ Keep children away from anything that can get hot: stoves, grills, heaters and candles.



Choking



- Choking occurs when a person's airway is blocked and air is not able to move in and out.
- The biggest choking hazards are small toys and hard foods.
- Button batteries can not only cause choking, but can also cause serious and even life-threatening injuries, quickly.

Prevention

- ✓ Inspect your home regularly for choking hazards, especially when small children are present.
- ✓ Cut food in small pieces and remember to chew slowly.
- ✓ Adults should not drink alcohol excessively, which can increase one's risk for choking.
- ✓ Learn CPR and the Heimlich maneuver.



Environmental Hazards



- Additional hazards may be found in or around homes that can be very harmful and even deadly to the occupants.
- Certified home inspectors should be able to identify these problems and help you find the correct ways to remediate the issues.
- Asbestos, carbon monoxide, lead and radon are all harmful substances that can be found in homes that can cause illness/injury or exacerbate health problems with long term, chronic exposure.
- Although government agencies have standards to regulate the air quality outside, it is the homeowner's responsibility to address the indoor air quality.



Drowning



- In 2013, over 3300 people of all age groups drowned according to the National Safety Council
- Most child drowning and near-drowning occurs in pools or bathtubs
- Water safety should be practiced by adults and children
 - ✓ Do not leave children unattended near any water and do not swim alone
 - ✓ Use proper life preservers
 - ✓ Learn how to swim and get children swim lessons
 - ✓ Safeguard and take proper precautions with hot tubs and pools
 - ✓ Only swim in safe, designated areas
 - ✓ Learn CPR and first aid and have emergency numbers close



Emergency preparedness



“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”

- It is important that you take as many steps to prevent accidents and injuries in your home as possible.
- There are many checklists, worksheets and even virtual tours that you can find online that will help walk you through your home and help point out any dangers .
- Although you can do your best to prevent home accidents, unexpected problems can still arise and it is important to be prepared in the event of an emergency situation.
- Do you have the tools and skills needed in an emergency? Do you have a plan in place? Are you informed?



Emergency preparedness



Key tips for being prepared in an emergency situation:

- Learn basic first aid and CPR, or have someone in the household designated
- Keep emergency numbers and contacts close at hand, know who to notify
- Have a plan for how to prepare for and respond to any emergencies, including an escape plan, include all members of the household...then practice your plan often!
- Know where the main shut offs are for water, gas and electricity and how to shut them off in an emergency setting.
- Create an emergency kit that you can use and/or take with you; it should include basic first aid supplies, copies of important documents or papers, food/water, extra money, family and emergency contact information.
- Try to remain calm and not panic, be sure to keep yourself safe when assisting others.



Resources



- National Safety Council
- Mayo Clinic
- National Institute of Fire and Safety Training
- American Red Cross
- Safe Kids Worldwide
- A Secure Life
- CDC
- www.homeminders.com
- <http://top10injuries.com/most-common-injuries-at-home/>
- WHO
- United States Consumer Product Safety Commission

