



Summer Safety: Infant and Small Child Care

With a baby or young child in your family, nothing is more important than safety. Parents and caregivers can take special care of babies and children this time of year to protect them from accidents or injuries. Toddlers are naturally inquisitive and often spend a lot of time climbing. Open windows and open spaces during the summer can dramatically increase their risk of falling or drowning. Warm weather precautions, including constant supervision, are vitally important in preventing accidents.

To keep babies and small children safe:

- * Use window guards and only open windows from the top.
- * Always supervise children in or near water.
- * Being prepared for emergencies. Take an American Red Cross course in First Aid and Infant/Child CPR. Make sure that others caring for your children are certified as well.
- * Keep emergency numbers on your cell phone speed dial.
- * NEVER leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles. Temperatures inside a closed vehicle can reach over 140 degrees F within minutes. Exposure to such high temperatures can kill in minutes.
- * With lots of family trips this time of year, always use child safety seats in the car.
- * Never keep guns in any child care setting.
- * Use gates on areas that are often left open. Put baby gates at the top and bottom of staircases. Be sure there are no spaces in which a child's head or fingers could become trapped or pinched. The slats on baby gates should be less than 4 1/4" apart.
- * Always monitor small children when at playgrounds, especially while they are climbing.
- * Carry a First Aid kit with you - you'll never know when you might need it. Include sun block, and make sure to check with your doctor on use for babies less than 6 months old.
- * Beware of dogs and other animals outside. Keep close watch of your children even with familiar pets. Small children need to learn how to pet animals and it will be some time before they understand how to do that.

About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and counsels victims of disasters; provides nearly half of the nation's blood supply; teaches lifesaving skills; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization — not a government agency — and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its humanitarian mission. For more information, please visit www.redcross.org.

