

# Choking and Strangulation Prevention Tips

Everything you need to know to keep your kids safe from choking or strangulation.

Is there a cell phone or set of car keys that hasn't made its way into your toddler's mouth? We didn't think so. Don't despair – there are simple tips that can help keep your children from getting injured as a result of their compulsive need to teethe, suck and drool on everyday objects and toys.

## Make Meals Fun and Safe

- Cut food for toddlers into tiny pieces. Children under 5 should not eat small, round or hard foods, including pieces of hot dogs, cheese sticks or chunks, hard candy, nuts, grapes, marshmallows or popcorn.
- Remember to have young kids eat in a high chair or at the table, not while lying down or playing. It is important to supervise your babies when they are eating or playing.



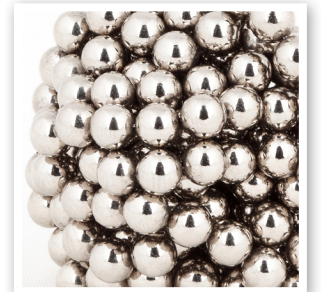
## Keep Small Objects Out of Reach

- See the world from a child's point of view. Get on the floor on your hands and knees so that you are at your child's eye level. Look for and remove small items.
- Keep small objects such as buttons, beads, jewelry, pins, nails, marbles, coins, stones and tacks out of reach and sight.

*Among children treated in emergency rooms for non-fatal choking incidents, almost 60 percent were food-related. Overall, 13 percent of cases involved swallowing coins and 19 percent involved candy or gum.*

## Be On the Lookout for Magnets

- Keep small magnets away from children. These include magnets found in construction sets, children's toys or stress-relieving adult desk toys; refrigerator magnets; and rare-earth magnets such as Buckyballs.
- Inspect games or toys that include magnets. Inspect children's play areas regularly for missing or dislodged magnets as well.
- Seek medical attention immediately if you suspect that magnets have been swallowed. Look for abdominal symptoms, such as pain, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. Note that in X-rays, multiple magnetic pieces may appear as a single object.



## Keep Cords Out of Reach

- Keep cords and strings, including those attached to window blinds, out of your child's reach. Move all cribs, beds, furniture and toys away from windows and window cords.
- If you live in a home where you are not allowed to replace your window coverings, follow basic window cord safety rules and order free retrofit kits from the Window Covering Safety Council at [www.windowcoverings.org](http://www.windowcoverings.org).



## Check Your Child's Clothes and Accessories

- Remove necklaces, purses, scarves, helmets or clothing with drawstrings when children are playing or sleeping.
- Don't tie strings or ribbons to a pacifier or toy. Remember that jewelry can be dangerous around your baby. Remove bibs before bedtime or nap time.

## Find the Perfect Toy for the Right Age

- Consider your child's age and development when purchasing [toys or games](#). It's worth a second to read the instructions and warning labels to make sure it's just right for your child.
- Before you've settled on the perfect toy, check to make sure there aren't any small parts or other potential choking hazards.
- When cleaning up, avoid toy chests that have no lids or safety hinges, as these could pose hazards to your child.



## Sign Up to Receive Product Recalls

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- Bookmark [www.recalls.gov](http://www.recalls.gov) for additional information about important product recalls for your family.