



Title: Environmental Safety Hazards for Infants and Children

CRITICAL ELEMENTS
A. General Elements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the “Developmental and Age Appropriate Plans of Care” for developmental and age specific safety interventions for each developmental/age group. • Ensure that equipment alarm limits are set appropriately for age and according to policy. • Ensure that equipment alarms are audible.
B. Burns: Electrical/Liquid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep electrical wires hidden or out of reach. • Make sure there are no frayed or broken wires. • Always check the temperature of liquids before feeding. • Check the temperature of bath water. • Place hot objects out of reach.
C. Strangulation/Suffocation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep all plastic bags stored out of reach. • Keep all small objects stored out of reach. • Do not tie pacifier on a string around infant’s neck. • Do not use pillows for infants. • Remove bibs at bedtime. • Ensure that balloons are made of mylar and are kept out of reach. • Avoid toys and other items with long strings. • Remove all crib toys that are strung across crib or playpen. • Never shake baby powder directly on infant and store closed baby powder container out of reach. • All cables should be secured to prevent them from being accidentally disconnected. • Maintain slack in lines, tubings, cords, etc. • Remove all unnecessary linens from the crib or bed. • Observe the placement and condition of all lines, tubes, and cords each time you enter a patient’s room. • Carefully snug/secure mini blind cord to cleat. Never leave cords hanging freely or with loops in it.
D. Aspiration/Drowning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never leave an infant/child alone in bath. • Supervise infant/child near any source of water. • Keep bathroom doors closed. • Hold infant for feeding; do not prop bottle. • Use pacifier with one-piece construction. • Keep buttons, beads, syringe caps and other small objects out of reach. • Keep floor free of any small objects. • Avoid foods that can be aspirated; for example, hard candy, nuts, food with pits or seeds, popcorn, grapes, dried beans, marshmallows, celery, raw carrots and hot dogs.
E. Poisoning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that cleaning supplies are not accessible to patients. • Keep all patient medications properly secured. • Ensure that any personal care items, i.e. shampoos, deodorants, mouthwash, lotions/ointments, etc. or parent medications (prescription and over-the-counter) are kept out of reach.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

F. Falls

- Select a bed that is appropriate for the child's developmental age.
- Ensure that warmer sides rails and isolette doors are closed.
- Ensure that crib rails are raised to full height at all times.
- When giving care to the child in crib/bed, keep one hand on him/her.
- Avoid using a highchair until the child can sit well without support.
- Secure all infants/children in infant seats and highchairs.
- Ensure that all ambulatory patients have safe shoes or socks on to avoid slipping.
- Keep exits, halls and passageways in rooms clear of toys, furniture or other items that could be obstructive.
- Never leave infant/child unattended on a raised surface.
- Ensure that all beds and cribs are in the locked position.
- Ensure floors are cleared of fluid or other objects that might contribute to falls.

G. Bodily Injury

- Keep sharp, jagged objects out of reach.
- Inspect toys for removable parts.
- Do not allow lollipops or similar objects in mouth when walking.
- Keep diaper pins closed and away from infant/child.

Source:

Wong and Whaley's
Clinical Manual of Pediatric Nursing
Mosby, Inc.
Fifth Edition (2000)