

# First Aid for Children

## POISONING

Check the label of the substance swallowed for first aid instructions. Keep the container and whatever remains of the swallowed substance.

Call your doctor or local Poison Control Center immediately. Keep these phone numbers on your list of emergency numbers.

DO NOT INDUCE VOMITING IF CHILD IS UNCONCIOUS OR APPEARS TO BE LOSING CONSCIOUSNESS.

DO NOT INDUCE VOMITING IF CHILD HAS TAKEN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING: GASOLINE, KEROSENE, CLEANING FLUID, INSECT SPRAY, FURNITURE POLISH, AMMONIA, HOUSEHOLD BLEACH, TOILET BOWL CLEANER, LIGHTER FLUID, PAINT THINNER, OR SUBSTANCES CONTAINING CAUSTIC SODA OR NITRIC ACID. Instead, give the child some water to dilute the poison. Do not force large quantities into the child. Do not force large quantities into the child. Call your physician or local Poison Control Center.

In the above cases, vomiting should not be induced because any of these substances could pass into the lungs and cause death.

If you are uncertain if the ingested substance is toxic, call your local Poison Control Center.

Do not try to make the child vomit if he has taken aspirin or other medicine. Giving several ounces of warm water will dilute the poison and aid in removing the stomach contents.

Some physicians recommend Syrup of Ipecac (U.S.P) to induce vomiting in case of poisoning. This can be purchased at your local pharmacy without a prescription and should be kept on hand. Read the package instructions carefully. Activated charcoal, which is very effective in absorbing poisons, is also advised by physicians for some poisons and should be kept on hand. It can be purchased at the drugstore.

## BURNS

*Mild sunburn and minor burns-* Don't use oily ointments or apply absorbent cotton to burn. Apply a cold compress to burns, then a nonoily burn ointment and cover with a clean gauze or sterile dressing. If sunburn causes blistering, call the doctor.

*Moderate to severe burns-* Any large or deep burn needs prompt medical attention. Don't treat the burn yourself. Call the doctor or take the child to the hospital. Wrap the child in a clean sheet and keep him warm with blankets. Keep him lying down with his head lower than the rest of his body until he can be seen by a doctor.

*What to do if a child's clothes catch on fire-* For a small baby, grab him and smother the flames with your own arms and body.

## FALLS

If a break or fracture is suspected, don't move that part of the body. Keep the child warm and comfortable until he can be seen by the doctor or taken to the hospital emergency room.

Don't underestimate head injuries, even minor head blows can be serious. If after a head injury a child becomes drowsy, dizzy, or pale, or if the pupils become unequally dilated, call the doctor.

## CUTS AND BLEEDING

Cleanse small cuts and bruises with soap and water; apply a clean bandage. To control bleeding from more severe wounds, place a clean cloth over the wounds, place a clean cloth over the wound and apply slight pressure until bleeding stops. To control nosebleeds, press the nose gently together at the bridge for five to ten minutes. The child should be sitting or standing, not lying down. If bleeding continues, apply cloth, wet cloth, or ice pack over the child's nose.

If bleeding does not stop, call the doctor.

## CHOKING

If a child swallows glass, pins, needles, or any other sharp object do not try to dislodge them. Call the doctor immediately.

If he swallows other foreign objects, wait a few seconds to see if the child will cough up the object by himself. Then in the case of an infant, hold him upside down by the ankles, open his mouth, and pull tongue gently to dislodge object. A small child should be held head down and given several sharp taps between the shoulder blades. If the object does not come out, take the child immediately to the hospital.

If infants or small children have difficulty breathing, call the doctor. If breathing has stopped, call the doctor and begin mouth-to-mouth breathing (resuscitation)

## INSECT BITES

For bites of flies, fleas, gnats, mosquitoes, and most spiders, a paste made of baking soda and cold cream helps relieve pain. Calamine lotion can be used to reduce itching.

If a bee stings baby, try removing the stinger by scooping under it with a fingernail or sharp object. Do not use tweezers or pull out the stinger as this may squeeze more venom into the area. Wash the area with soap and water and apply ice. But do protect baby's delicate skin from direct contact with ice by placing a thin cloth between the ice and the skin. And check with your baby's physician right away.

If a child has a serious reaction to a bee sting- severe swelling, hives, shortness of breath, or difficulty in swallowing- take him to an emergency room immediately.

### ANIMAL BITES

If an animal bites your child, wash the wound at once with soap and water. Apply pressure dressings for any excessive bleeding. Take the child immediately to the nearest hospital; or physician for further treatment. Testing is essential to determine if the animal has rabies. Notify the police and/or health department.

### MOUTH-TO-MOUTH RESUSCITATION

In the event of drowning, suffocation, electric shock, or gas poisoning, mouth-to-mouth resuscitation is sometimes required to restore breathing. To apply artificial respiration to infants and small children, follow these steps:

1. Check the child's mouth for obstruction. Tilt head back and pull chin until it points straight up.
2. Place your mouth over child's open mouth and nose, or over his mouth holding his nose. Blow very gently until you see the lungs expand and the chest rise slightly. Excessive pressure can cause damage in a small child so do not blow too hard or too long.
3. Remove your mouth from the child's face and allow him to exhale. Repeat every three seconds or 20 times a minute. If the child's stomach becomes inflated with air, press gently.
4. If after a few minutes the child does not respond, re-check to see that there are no obstructions in his mouth. You may turn the child over and give him a few sharp taps between the shoulder blades to remove the object. Resume mouth-to-mouth breathing and continue until the child breathes for himself.

### PLANTS

Most people are unaware of the large numbers of house and garden plants that are poisonous when eaten or that can cause a skin rash when touched. Since small children like to sample things by putting them in their mouth, many plants can be dangerous to them. So, to be sure, keep all plants out of baby's reach- inside the house or in the yard. Also, the store bulbs and seeds where children can't reach them.

### ANIMALS-PETS AND OTHERS

Even the most tolerant family pet- dog or cat- can lose patients with a playful child and might bite or scratch, especially if backed into a corner or interrupted while eating. Baby must be warned not to tease or abuse family pets and of the dangers of approaching unfamiliar animals.

### AWAY FROM HOME

#### Auto Safety

To help prevent injuries to your baby in a care, take note of these precautions:

Ordinary car beds and bassinets do not protect. Use protective carriers and seats that conform to standards set by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Today, every state and the District of Columbia has legislation requiring that infants and young children be securely fastened in car seats. Keep a harness or safety strap on baby when he is in a carriage or stroller. Never leave baby unattended in a carriage or stroller.

#### Ensuring Baby's Safety with a Babysitter

First of all, be sure that you know your sitters well and have confidence in them. Make sure the sitter understands the following instructions and safety precautions.

- Feeding, bathing, diapering, bedtime instructions.
- Any allergies or other disabilities of the child.
- Safest places in your home for baby to play- and those that may be unsafe.
- Location of the first-aid equipment and emergency reference chart.
- Instructions for exit in case of fire. Sitter should immediately take child out of the house and then call for help.
- Instructions in case of poisoning.
- Never leave the child unattended or open the door to strangers.
- Leave a number where you can be reached and the number of a neighbor or friend close by.
- Leave a proper car seat suitable for your baby's age and size.
- Never let a child ride unrestrained or while held in an adults arms. In a crash or sudden stop, a child can easily be thrown and seriously injured, even if held in the arms of an adult wearing a seat belt.
- Keep windows nearest baby closed and car doors locked.
- Never leave a child unattended in a car, even for a brief interval.
- Keep ashtrays in car clean and closed.