

The holidays are supposed to be the most beautiful time of the year, but this festive season can also present many choking hazards for children.

Choking is one of the primary causes of accidental injury and death in children. We often have a massive flood of gifts, new foods, holiday décor, and visits to and from family and friends during the holidays.

Although festive, these environmental changes can increase a young child's chance of encountering a choking hazard.

Stay informed and protect your little ones by reading more about choking prevention and first aid. <https://www.pediatricdreamcare.com/Choking-Prevention-and-First-Aid-for-Infants-and-C> #ChildSafety #ChokingHazards #KeepKidsSafe

Being watchful and prepared can help your family keep the holidays safe and joyful for the entire family.

“People just need to be reminded to keep their guard up, especially in new places and as we put up those different decorations,” We recommend. “Just pause for a minute and check things to ensure they’re all safe. We want to keep the holidays joyful, so use the decorations safely and have fun.”



<https://www.pediatricdreamcare.com/CPR>

“The new toys and the increased number of small items in the house are a big hazard. There’s also different food around the house during the holidays: lots of nuts, small or hard candies, which can create a big risk for choking as well,” “And then there’s the decorations. Ornaments hanging on a Christmas tree or a decoration with a small piece that isn’t normally part of someone’s home décor can all be potential hazards.”

Kids under 4 years old and children with developmental delays are particularly at risk. Between their tendency to mouth everything in sight and their lack of molars, it can be much easier for a little kid to choke on a stray nut at Grandma’s or a small LEGO piece from Big Brother’s new holiday gift.

Keep holiday décor safe.

The first step is to check your environment. “Do a sweep of the house and just look around. Ask yourself, ‘What small items do I have that I may not have noticed?’ especially as you decorate the home and put holiday things out. Check the Christmas tree and look at what’s on those low-hanging branches. Are there small ornaments or items with little pieces that can be undone or pulled apart? Maybe put those a little bit higher.”

Getting down to a child’s level and seeing what they see can be an excellent way to find hidden dangers. Ornament hooks, tiny light bulbs, beads, or anything with small pieces can all be potential hazards and should be removed or placed out of reach. “If you have nicer ornaments with small parts, put them on the upper part of your tree or mantel. Save the lower areas for big, clunky wooden decorations or soft toys,” she advised.

Reduce hazardous holiday foods.

Popular holiday foods like popcorn, nuts, marshmallows, and candy canes (and all hard candies) present a higher risk of choking, especially for infants and toddlers. Even older kids can use a little extra supervision around holiday snacks. While seeing how many marshmallows you can stuff in your mouth at once may be fun, it can be very dangerous for youngsters.

“Many kinds of holiday foods can be conducive to choking. We always recommend to our families that when kids eat at any age, they should sit down. They shouldn’t be walking around; they shouldn’t be wandering; encourage them to chew and swallow,” “And then just be careful of some behaviors—for example, throwing popcorn in your mouth, or stuffing in big sticky things like marshmallows.”

Stay vigilant when visiting family and friends.

There’s nothing like enjoying time with loved ones during the holidays. However, families with young children need to be exceptionally watchful when going to holiday parties or visiting with family and friends, “Parents need to be mindful and watching when they’re in other people’s homes. Perhaps there is a bowl of nuts on a low table or a dropped candy that a kid could pick up. There can be a lot of distractions, so it’s important to keep an eye on young kids who may be at risk for choking.”

Keep holiday gifts age-appropriate

We recommend sticking to toys appropriate for your child’s age level. Toys should be labeled with an age range to help parents determine which toys suit their child. For families with several children, help keep little ones safe by putting toys with small parts out of reach.

“When shopping for infants or toddlers, look at the toys that you’re buying, and make sure that they’ve got big parts,” she said. “If you have older kids in the household, the older kids need to put their toys with small parts up high, or they need to be played with in a different area.” Cleaning up and ensuring no pieces are left on the ground is also essential when little kids are around.

We warn families that batteries are a choking hazard and hazardous when swallowed, so parents must be cautious. “We would encourage parents to check that the battery cover is screwed on, not something that the kids can pop off and easily open.”

What to do if your child chokes

If a child is choking, you need to call 911 and get emergency services right away. We also recommend that parents take a CPR first aid course to be prepared for emergencies. Fast action is critical in a respiratory distress situation.

“First look and see if you can see anything in the mouth. If there’s something there that you can easily sweep in and pick up, then parents use a one-finger sweep into the mouth and pull it out,” “If you can’t do that in a young baby, then turn them over and do some gently but firm back blows with the child’s head facing downward for gravity to help. If it’s an older child, they’ll probably need to do the Heimlich maneuver.”

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