

# You can prevent Choking



Grate hard fruits and vegetables to prevent choking.

## Did you know?

- When a toy has a label that says **Not suitable for children under 3**, this means that there may be small parts that could cause choking.
- Even if you think your child is ready to play with the toy, do not give it to him or her until age 3.

Babies, toddlers, and young children can choke if food or small objects stick in their throats and block their breathing.

Babies can choke because they have undeveloped throat muscles and small airways. Toddlers are at risk because they like to put things in their mouths. They do not have all their teeth and cannot chew large pieces of food. Turn over this page to find out which objects can choke children.

## Safety check

- ✓ Do not give foods such as nuts, popcorn, gum, and hard candy to children under 4.
- ✓ Cut foods into small pieces before you give them to your child. (Turn over this page for some examples.)
- ✓ Keep coins, buttons, batteries, keys, earrings, and other small objects where your child cannot reach them.
- ✓ Teach children to stay sitting and be calm while they are eating. They will be less likely to choke on their food.
- ✓ Check toys and children's equipment (such as the crib) for small pieces that might come off.

*For more information, turn over this page*

# *The facts on preventing* Choking

## **Choking hazards**

Here are some objects that can cause children to choke:

- large pieces of food (such as pieces of hot dogs, fruits, or vegetables)
- bones
- candies
- gum
- nuts
- small household items (such as earrings, batteries, keys, buttons)
- balloons
- coins
- pieces of toys

## **Food safety**

- Grate hard fruits and vegetables (such as carrots and apples).
- Cut softer fruits and vegetables into small pieces (such as grapes and cherries).
- Remove all bones from food (such as chicken).
- Cut hot dogs into long thin strips, and then cut those strips into small pieces. If pieces of hot dog are too big, they can plug your child's airway.
- Do not give nuts, popcorn, gum, or hard candy to children under 4.

## **Pacifiers**

Check pacifiers regularly. Make sure the nipple part is firmly attached to the handle. If it is not, the soft part could come off, causing your baby to choke. Throw out the pacifier when the nipple part has cracks or when it becomes sticky.

When your baby starts teething, do not let him or her chew on the pacifier. Give your baby a teething ring instead.

Do not attach strings or cords to a pacifier.

## **Balloons**

Do not use latex balloons as toys. Balloons or pieces of popped balloon can cause choking. Use foil balloons instead.

If you do allow your child to play with balloons, supervise him or her closely. Do not let your child put balloons or balloon pieces in his or her mouth.

## **Older children can help**

Teach older children to keep small toys and pieces of toys away from babies, toddlers, and young children.

## **Know what to do in an emergency**

Learn first aid to help a baby or child who is choking.