

# Baby Walkers: Important Safety Information

Many parents think walkers will help their children learn to walk. But they don't. In fact, walkers can actually delay when a child starts to walk. Also, baby walkers send thousands of children to hospitals every year. Here is information from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) about why baby walkers are not safe and what you can do.

## Injuries can happen when children in baby walkers

- **Roll down the stairs**—which often causes broken bones and severe head injuries. This is how most children get hurt in baby walkers.
- **Get burned**—a child can reach higher in a walker. It is now easier for a child to pull a tablecloth off a table and spill hot coffee, grab pot handles off the stove, and reach radiators, fireplaces, or space heaters.
- **Drown**—a child can fall into a pool or bathtub while in a walker.
- **Be poisoned**—reaching high objects is easier in a walker.

Most walker injuries happen while adults are watching. Parents or caregivers simply cannot respond quickly enough. A child in a walker can move more than 3 feet in 1 second! Baby walkers are never safe to use, even with an adult close by.

Note: Since 1997, baby walkers are made so they can't fit through most doors, or they have brakes to stop them at the edge of a step. However, some may still have wheels, so children can still move fast and reach higher. The AAP has called for a ban on the manufacture and sale of baby walkers with wheels.

## What You Can Do

- Throw out your baby walkers!
- Make sure that there are no baby walkers wherever your child is being cared for, such as child care centers or someone else's home.
- Try something just as enjoyable but safer, like
  - Stationary activity centers—they look like walkers but have no wheels. They usually have seats that rotate, tip, and bounce.
  - Play yards or playpens—these are great safety zones for children as they learn to sit, crawl, or walk.
  - High chairs—older children often enjoy sitting up in a high chair and playing with toys on the tray.

## For More Information

American Academy of Pediatrics  
[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org) and [www.HealthyChildren.org](http://www.HealthyChildren.org)

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In all aspects of its publishing program (writing, review, and production), the AAP is committed to promoting principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.