



A healthy home is safe

A safe home reduces accidents and injuries.

The main idea

Many accidental injuries occur in the home. Common causes are falls, fires, drowning, choking, and poisonings. Young children and older adults are often the most likely to be injured.

How it affects your health

Accidental injuries can result in hospitalizations, surgeries, and long-term disabilities. They are among the leading causes of death in the home.

How to know if you have a problem

- Clutter—such as clothing, shoes, papers, and toys—creates dangers for slips, trips, and falls
- Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors (at least one of each device for each floor of the home) are either not present or not working
- Poor or no lighting in stairways, doorways, and walkways
- Hot water from the faucet is very hot
- Dangerous items—such as medicines and vitamins, household cleaning products, matches and lighters, and sharp tools—are stored where children can reach them
- Damaged electrical cords are present

How to fix the problem in the home

- Clear away things—like clutter, loose electrical cords, slippery throw rugs, and spilled food—that might make you slip, trip, or fall
- Install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors on each floor, put in fresh batteries every autumn and spring, and check that the devices are working properly
- Put fire extinguishers in key places, such as the kitchen, bedroom, and basement; replace or recharge when needed
- Add or fix lighting in stairways, doorways, and walkways
- Replace damaged electrical cords
- Set hot water heater at 120 degrees Fahrenheit or lower to prevent burns
- Post the phone number for the Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222) next to every phone, and program cell phones with that number
- If children live in or visit your home, supervise them at all times, and childproof your home:
 - Store all dangerous items out of reach of children
 - Always use safety devices, such as baby gates, child-proof containers, and safety latches on doors, windows, and cabinets
- Do a thorough home safety check

How to learn more

- For a detailed home safety checklist, see Safe Kids USA: <http://www.safekids.org>
- Connecticut Poison Control Center, <http://poisoncontrol.uchc.edu/>

For more information, call the Connecticut Department of Public Health's Healthy Homes Initiative at 860-509-7299, see www.ct.gov/dph/healthyhomes, or call Infoline at 2-1-1

