

CHOKING

[SANFORD CHILDREN'S SAFETY CENTER]

Through the eyes of a child...

If I see it, I need to taste it to learn
about it – in my mouth it goes.



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CHOKING HAZARDS ARE EVERYWHERE

Choking is a very common cause of unintentional injury or death in children under age one, and the danger remains significant until the age of five. Objects such as safety pins, small parts from toys, and coins cause choking, but food is responsible for most incidents. Children's natural curiosity leads them to explore and put things in their mouths. Children need adults to keep them safe by watching out for choking hazards.

THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD:

- I explore my surroundings through my senses – seeing, touching, hearing, smelling and tasting.
- If an object can fit through an opening of a toilet paper tube, it can fit in my mouth and I can choke on it.
- I like to eat what you are eating, but I don't master the skill of chewing until I am 4 years old.

THINGS FOR PARENTS TO DO:

- Supervise children while they are playing and eating.
- Get on the floor on your hands and knees, so that you are at your child's eye level. Look for and remove small items such as jewelry, coins, buttons, pins, nails, and stones.

CHOKING PREVENTION CHECKLIST

- Be aware of choking hazards at mealtimes. The majority of childhood choking injuries are associated with food items, including hot dogs, cheese sticks/cheese chunks, hard candies, nuts, grapes, carrots, popcorn, marshmallows, and peanut butter.
- Be aware of choking hazards in your child's play area. Regularly check toys for damage that may have created loose small parts. Objects that are round, oval or cylindrical in shape are associated with the greatest risk of choking death.
- No balloons (uninflated and inflated). If a piece of balloon gets into the child's airway, it can quickly cause suffocation. The Heimlich Maneuver cannot remove balloon pieces. This danger is heightened because young children love to explore objects with their mouths.
- Use a Choking Tester or toilet paper tube to determine choking hazards. If the item can fit in one of these it is too small and is a choking hazard to your child.
- Learn CPR and choking intervention techniques (Check our www.sanfordhealth.org for available Sanford CPR classes)

SUGGESTED SAFETY PRODUCTS:

- Choking Tester

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