

Study examines injuries with baby bottles, pacifiers and sippy cups in the US

May 14 2012



The study shows that children were more prone to injury if they were walking or running with a sippy cup, bottle or pacifier in their mouth. Credit: Nationwide Children's Hospital

A new study by researchers in the Center for Biobehavioral Health and the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's Hospital examined pediatric injuries associated with baby bottles, pacifiers and sippy cups. Researchers found that from 1991 to 2010, an estimated 45,398 children younger than three years of age were treated in U.S. emergency departments for injuries related to the use of these products. This equates to an average of 2,270 injuries per year, or one child treated in a hospital emergency department every four hours for these injuries.

The study, which is being released online May 14, 2012 and being

published in the June 2012 print issue of [Pediatrics](#), found that [baby bottles](#) accounted for 66 percent of injuries, followed by pacifiers at 20 percent and sippy cups at 14 percent. Body regions most commonly injured were the mouth (71 percent) and the head, face or neck (20 percent).

Most injuries were the result of falls while using the product (86 percent), which suggests that [children](#) were walking or running with the product in their mouth at the time of the [injury](#).

"Two-thirds of injuries examined in our study were to one-year-old children who are just learning to walk and more prone to falls," said the study's co-author Sarah Keim PhD, MA, MS, principal investigator in the Center for Biobehavioral Health at Nationwide Children's Hospital. "Having children sit down while drinking from baby bottles or sippy cups can help reduce the occurrences of these injuries."

Both the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) recommend that children be transitioned to regular, lidless cups at 12 months of age. The AAP also suggests that parents try to limit pacifier use after six months of age as use after that age may increase the risk of [ear infections](#).

"These are products that almost everyone uses," noted study co-author, Lara McKenzie, PhD, principal investigator in the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's Hospital. "Educating parents and caregivers about the importance of transitioning their children away from these products at the ages recommended by the AAP and AAPD could prevent up to 80 percent of the injuries related to baby bottles, pacifiers and sippy cups."

This is the first study to use a nationally representative sample to examine injuries associated with bottles, pacifiers and sippy cups that

were treated in U.S. emergency departments. Data for this study were obtained from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS), which is operated by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. The NEISS provides information on consumer product-related and sports and recreation-related injuries treated in hospital emergency departments across the country.

Both Drs. Keim and McKenzie are faculty members at The Ohio State University College of Medicine.

Provided by Nationwide Children's Hospital

Citation: Study examines injuries with baby bottles, pacifiers and sippy cups in the US (2012, May 14) retrieved 10 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-05-injuries-baby-bottles-pacifiers-sippy.html>

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