

Nursery product-related injuries on the rise among young children

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A study by Nationwide Children's Hospital found that injuries related to nursery products are on the rise, and that these injuries were most commonly associated with baby carriers. Credit: Nationwide Children's Hospital

Parents of young children use nursery products daily but these products

are associated with injury more often than you might think. A new study from the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's Hospital found that about every 8 minutes in the U.S., a child three years of age or younger is treated in a hospital emergency-department for a nursery product-related injury - which is approximately 66,000 children each year.

The study, published online today by *Pediatrics*, looked back over 21 years of data from January 1991 through December 2011. During the early years of the study there was a significant decline in injuries, which was attributed to a decrease in injuries from baby walkers. In the last 8 years of the study, however, the number of nursery product-related injuries steadily increased, rising nearly 25 percent (23.7%).

"We have achieved great success in preventing baby walker-related injuries by improving the design of the product and instituting better safety standards" said Gary Smith, MD, DrPH, the senior author of the study and director of the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's Hospital. "We now need to aggressively apply this approach to other nursery products. It is unacceptable that we are still seeing so many injuries to [young children](#) from these products."

The nursery product-related injuries seen in the study were most commonly associated with baby carriers (20%), cribs/mattresses (19%), and strollers/carriages (17%). These injuries typically (88%) occurred at home, and most (80%) were due to a fall. The majority of the injuries were to the head, face or neck (81%).

"Many of the injuries associated with nursery products are to the head or face" said Tracy Mehan, manager of translational research at the Center for Injury Research and Policy. "For children this young, these can be quite serious. Of particular concern was the increase in the number and rate of concussions in recent years."

There are some things families can do to help keep their children safer while using these products. Researchers recommend that parents and caregivers follow the 4 Rs - do your research, check for recalls, register the product, and read the manual.

Do your research:

Before bringing a new nursery product into the home, go online and look at information from a trusted organization for what types of products are both useful and safe for your baby. They will have the newest research and the most up-to-date recommendations. Here are a few resources we recommend:

- <http://www.nationwidechildrens.org/cirp-nursery-safety>
- <http://www.HealthyChildren.org>
- <http://makesafehappen.com>
- <http://www.cpsc.gov>

Check for recalls:

Go to <http://www.recalls.gov> and search the products you're considering bringing into your home to see if they have been recalled. While you are there, sign up to receive alerts about future recalls. There is a new recall for a nursery product about every two weeks in the U.S., and up to 80% of recalled children's products remain in homes following a recall.

Register your product:

When you bring a new product into your home, make sure to register your purchase with the manufacturer. This will ensure you're notified if the product is recalled. There's usually a postcard that comes with the product or the packaging might direct you to complete a form on the

manufacturer's website.

Read the manual:

Take a few minutes to read the manual before you use it so you can learn how the product works, when to lock it, when to buckle, where to use it, and where not to use it. You also want to confirm that the product is the right one for your child's age and size.

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 database provides information on consumer product-related and sports- and recreation-related injuries treated in hospital emergency departments across the country.

Provided by Nationwide Children's Hospital

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