

Don't play around when it comes to toy safety

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(HealthDay)—There's nothing like a child's expression when getting a new toy. But toy safety belongs at the top of your holiday shopping list.

A landmark study from Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, found that more than 3 million kids went to U.S. emergency rooms from 1990 through 2011 for toy-related injuries.

Falls and collisions are the most common injuries overall, but kids face different safety threats from [toys](#) depending on their age. Under 3, the greatest risk is choking on small toys and toy parts. Swallowing objects is common among kids under 5.

Forty-two percent of injuries in kids aged 5 to 17, and 28 percent of those under age 5, involve riding toys—from tricycles to scooters. There have been more than 500,000 injuries related to foot-powered scooters since that craze started in 2000, many involving a broken bone or a dislocation.

To keep kids safe, always read the guidelines printed on toy packaging—and look closely in case they're in small print. Avoid all toys with small parts that a child could put into his or her mouth and choke on. Teach children to use any ride-on toys safely. Closely supervise kids and outfit them with the appropriate safety gear.

Try these additional tips from the Nationwide Children's Hospital and [Safekids.org](#):

- Follow age restrictions and all other toy manufacturer warnings.
- Regularly check your child's toys for any parts that have become loose and therefore pose a choking hazard.
- Limit riding toys to dry, flat surfaces far away from roads with vehicular traffic.
- Closely supervise children under age 8 when on a riding toy.
- Make sure kids wear helmets, kneepads and elbow pads on all riding toys, including bikes.
- Regularly check the U.S. government's [Recalls.gov](#) to see if any

toys that you've bought or are about to buy have been recalled.

More information: Check out SafeKids.org for more [safety tips](#) and helpful links.

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