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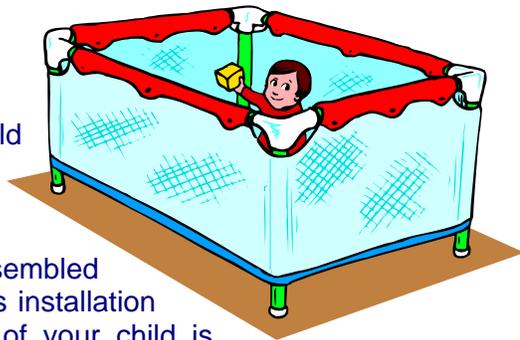
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Playpen Safety

Playpens that meet current government safety regulations can provide a great safety zone for your baby as they learn to play, crawl, sit and stand, however, preventable play-related injuries, some fatal, still exist.

Playpen Safety Checklist

- ➔ First and foremost, remember that a baby should never be left unsupervised in a playpen for any length of time.
- ➔ It is very important to make sure a playpen is assembled correctly before using it. Follow the manufacturer's installation instructions and make sure the weight and age of your child is appropriate for the playpen.
- ➔ Place the playpen strategically away from any potential hazards the infant may be tempted to reach out to from inside the playpen. Position the playpen away from stairs, doors, furniture and appliances and never put a playpen near a window or patio door where blinds or curtain cords are within reach, as these pose strangulation risks.
- ➔ Do not add an extra mattress to the playpen because your baby can get trapped between the mattress and the side of the playpen causing suffocation. Make sure the mattress is firm. Worn-down mattress pads could pose a suffocation hazard.
- ➔ Older mesh playpens may have openings large enough to catch a button or a hook on a child's clothing and as a result, babies have strangled. If your small finger can pass through the mesh, the playpen should be discarded.
- ➔ Don't use playpens if the vinyl top rails or floor pads are torn. Many infants have choked on the small pieces of vinyl and foam, or have suffocated after crawling under a torn vinyl floor pad cover.



- Latches or pivoting hinges on the tops rails of playpens should always be in the closed position or completely rotated in place, so they won't collapse and trap the baby. Stop using the playpen if the latches don't stay closed or when an infant becomes able to unlatch them.
- When in use, the sides of a playpen should be securely locked in place. Never leave a baby in a playpen with the side down; the baby can roll into the space between the mattress and the mesh side and suffocate.
- Never tie a pacifier or other items around a child's neck or affix a cord to clothing. Infants have fallen in playpens and have strangled on a pacifier cord or a clothing string because it became caught on the playpen.
- To prevent entanglement, remove toys strung across playpens and mobiles when a baby begins to push up on his/her hands and knees, or when the baby reaches 5 months of age – whichever comes first.
- Do not put large stuffed animals or toys in a playpen. Your baby could use these toys to climb out of the playpen.
- Do not let your baby sleep in a playpen because they do not meet the same safety requirements and are not as durable as cribs. They are not designed to be used as a sleeping surface.
- If a change table or bassinet is provided as an accessory for the playpen, always follow the manufacturer's instructions for assembly and use.
- Never place a baby in a playpen while the change table or bassinet accessory is still in place. A baby's head can become trapped in the gap that is created between the accessory and the playpen and cause strangulation or suffocation.
- Do not place a baby on the change table accessory to sleep.
- Do not add blankets, pillows or an extra mattress to the playpen. The use of these items could lead to suffocation.

Choosing a playpen

- Before buying a second-hand playpen or re-using a playpen for another baby, check with the manufacturer and Health Canada for [recalls](#).
- Playpens must have a label that states the manufacturer, model, and date of manufacture.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions and recommendations for weight and age requirements. It is important to make sure that the product is assembled correctly before using it.



- ➡ Make sure the sides are sturdy and made of mosquito-type netting.
- ➡ Avoid playpens that have sharp edges or hinges that can pinch, scrape, or cut fingers.
- ➡ Do not buy playpens that have protruding bolts, and make sure that the ends of bolts are covered with tight acorn nuts. Joints and ends of metal tubing should also be covered with a pad or cap.
- ➡ Check that the mattress pad is firm.
- ➡ Check for tears in vinyl rail coverings, mesh panels, or in the mattress pad of the playpen.

To obtain more information on Playpen Safety, please click on [Health Canada](#).