



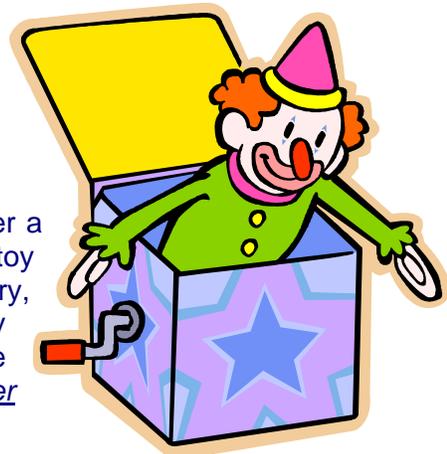
## *Toy Safety Checklist*

Despite your best efforts to choose the safest toys for your children, injuries and accidents can occur. Toys may endure wear and tear over time and could expose your children to potential hazards. Choosing toys carefully will assure that playtime with your children will be fun, educational, and most importantly, safe. By using the safety checklist below, you can prevent toy-related injuries.

Please click on any of the links below to go directly to your specified topic within this document.

[Before Buying](#)  
[After Buying](#)  
[General Safety](#)

According to statistics, Canadian consumers purchase over a billion dollars a year on toys. In Canada, responsibility for toy safety is shared amongst the government, the toy industry, safety associations, parents and caregivers. Any toy advertised, sold or imported in Canada must meet the safety requirements defined in the [Canada Consumer Product Safety Act](#) and the [Toys Regulations](#).



Toy makers must ensure their toys meet these regulations, and Health Canada's product safety officers regularly check stores for unsafe toys but it is important to know that sometimes, unsafe toys do make their way onto store shelves and into our homes.

### **Toys With Magnets – Parents Beware!**

Health Canada has submitted, yet again, another warning that toys containing small, powerful magnets are a health risk to children.

Recently a three-year-old boy swallowed two magnet rods (2.7 cm long) from a Mega Brands 'Magnetix Magnetic Building Set'. The child received immediate medical care and did not sustain injuries but it could have gone the other way – within a moment's notice.



The magnets are made of rare-earth mineral neodymium and are at least 15 times more powerful than standard magnets. They stick together with such force that if more than one is swallowed, they can bore holes in the stomach or intestines and cause severe, life-threatening complications within hours. If the high-powered magnets are not detected and removed, they can cause tissue

necrosis where two loops of bowel are squeezed together which occludes the blood supply to that area of the gut causing infection, dissemination – and yes, even death. Survivors can experience serious, lifelong health problems.

To read reports of injuries to children in U.S. and Canada, please go to 'Additional Resources for Magnetic Toys' at the end of this document.

## **BEFORE BUYING**

Buy only toys suitable for the child's age group and abilities. Read the manufacturer's 'recommended age' label on the toy. Toys for older children are not safe for younger children.



Look for warnings or other safety messages on the toy packaging, i.e. how to use the toy and if adult supervision is recommended.

Be realistic about your child's abilities and level of maturity when choosing an age-appropriate toy. Projectiles, missiles and other similar toys can be turned into weapons and injure your children – especially their eyes.

Plug-in electrical toys should be labelled by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA).

Avoid toys with sharp points, edges and breakable and glass parts that can cause cuts or abrasions. As well, avoid toys that have exposed wires and parts that get hot, contain lead paint or other toxic materials, have springs, gears or hinged parts that could pinch tiny fingers or become caught in your child's hair.

Check rigid eyes and noses on soft animal toys to make sure they cannot be pulled off. Squeeze toys for loose or removable squeakers. These items present a choking hazard to young children.

Examine wheels on toy cars and trucks to make sure small parts cannot be pulled off or apart.

Make sure small parts of larger toys cannot break off.

Toys with long or stretchy cords can become wrapped around a child's neck presenting a strangulation hazard.

Children's ears are very sensitive and their hearing is easily damaged. Loud, musical toys can damage a child's hearing if used for extended periods of time.



- Ride-on toys can tip. Children on ride-on toys can move very quickly, running into objects or falling down stairs.
- Small powerful magnets used in toys may pose a hazard if the item containing the magnet, or the magnet itself, is small enough to be swallowed. Magnet toys like 'Buckyballs' and 'Magnetix' can cause serious injury or death.
- Before purchasing a rattle or teether for a baby, make sure it is large enough that it can't enter your baby's mouth.
- Avoid toys for the tub and pool that have tall, pointed parts that could hurt a child should they fall on them.
- Examine homemade toys for all of the same hazards listed above.
- Never purchase highly combustible toys or ones that use flammable liquids.



## **AFTER BUYING**

- Look for warnings and other safety messages on toy packaging.
- Read all instructions carefully that are included in the box and on the toy packaging and assemble according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Throw away all toy packaging such as plastic, cellophane, tape, ties, small packing pellets and styrofoam. These items present a suffocating and/or choking hazard. Staples on packaging can cause cuts.



- Always supervise your children when they are playing and teach them how to use toys safely.
- A child should not use a toy to harm another child or pet.
- Make sure that batteries in toys are installed properly. If batteries are installed incorrectly they can overheat and explode, and old batteries may leak battery acid, which can cause burns or poisoning. Small 'button' batteries can be swallowed and may cause choking and/or poisoning.
- Do not allow a child to sleep with a battery-operated toy.

- Supervise children playing with balloons. Latex balloons have caused a number of deaths wherein the balloon or a piece of broken balloon was inhaled and blocked a child's airway.
- Remove toys and mobiles strung across cribs and playpens when baby begins to push up with their hands and knees. These items can become a strangulation hazard.

Use ride-on toys far away from stairs, traffic, swimming pools and other dangerous areas. Remove hazards like furniture, lamps, cords or appliances before play begins.

Teach children to put their toys away. A toy designed for an older child should be stored far out of reach of a curious toddler. Small pieces or tiles belonging to board games should be put away as they pose a choking hazard.

Examine toys regularly for signs of wear and tear. Keep broken toys out of reach until they can be repaired, and throw away broken toys that cannot be repaired.

Store toys for older children separately from those for younger children.

Use a toy box without a lid, or one with a lightweight lid that will not fall on a child. If the toy box has a lid, make sure the box has large air holes for breathing, in case a child climbs inside. Never use airtight storage bins for toys.



## **GENERAL SAFETY**

Only adults should install batteries in toys. Improper installation, or mixing different battery types, can cause batteries to leak or overheat and could injure a child. Ensure your children cannot open a toy's battery compartment. Do not let a child sleep with a battery-operated toy.

Always keep uninflated latex balloons or broken balloon pieces out of reach of children. Latex balloons are best used for decoration - not play.

Teach children of all ages that small magnets and small items containing magnets should never be placed in their mouths.

Never place attractive or brightly coloured toys on high shelves; your child may be tempted to climb up to reach it.

Health Canada receives about 71 reports per year on toy-related health or safety concerns.

Toys can be recalled for health or safety reasons. Check the [Healthy Canadians Recalls and Safety Alerts Database](#) or download the [mobile application](#) for more information about the latest recalls.

Canadian toymakers are required to ensure their products follow the rules set out in the *Canada Consumer Product Safety Act* and associated regulations, such as the *Toys Regulations*.



**The KidsCare National Program** is the product-safety related child injury

prevention and information program of Health Canada. KidsCare reaches out to children, parents, caregivers, day care centres, and schools with useful information on consumer products, including toys. For more information on Product Safety or KidsCare contact your nearest Product Safety Office.

If you think you have a toy that could be dangerous to children, contact your nearest [Consumer Product Safety Office](#) or call 1-866-662-0666.

- ➔ [Health Canada's Toy Safety Tips](#)
- ➔ [Health Canada's Toys and Toy boxes](#)
- ➔ [Health Canada's Safety with Radar - Activity Book](#)
- ➔ [Health Canada's Consumer Product Safety web section](#)
- ➔ [Children's Safety Association of Canada's Toy Safety Checklist](#)
- ➔ [Canadian Toy Association Safety section](#)
- ➔ [Health Canada's Is your Child Safe? Playtime](#)
- ➔ [Health Canada's Play smart, play safe](#)
- ➔ [Health Canada's Toy safety during the holidays](#)
- ➔ [Health Canada's consumer product recalls](#)

For safety information on food, health & consumer products click on [Safe Consumers](#)

For more articles on health and safety issues go to the [It's Your Health web section](#)

You can also call toll free at 1-866-225-0709 or TTY at 1-800-267-1245\*

## **Additional Resources for Magnetic Toys**

[Health Canada Alerts Parents and Caregivers to the Dangers of Swallowing Small Magnetic Parts from Mega Brands Magnetix Magnetic Building Sets](#)

[High Powered Magnets Pulled from Canadian Shelves](#)

[High Powered Magnets – More Cases Involving Children and Teenagers](#)

[Buckyballs – U.S. Officials Stop Firm from Selling Magnets](#)

[Christmas Season Safety](#)

