

Fall Prevention

Window Falls



Each year in the United States, 15 to 20 children under the age of 11 die, and nearly 15,000 are injured, because of falls from windows. Window falls tend to occur in low-income neighborhoods with deteriorating housing, unsatisfactory window construction and no air conditioning.

"Window falls are a major cause of injuries and death in children, especially those living in urban areas," says Wendy Pomerantz, MD, an Emergency Medicine physician at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center.

Children living in apartment buildings fall from windows at five times the rate of children living in other types of homes. The height of the fall, rate of the fall, force of impact and surface on which the child falls influence the severity of injuries. The greater the height of the fall, the higher the death rate.

Tips for Preventing Falls

- Never put a baby's crib next to a window.
- **Never** depend on screens to keep children from falling out of windows. Screens are not designed to prevent falls.
- Safeguard windows with window guards or window stops. Window guards prevent children from falling out of open windows. Window stops prevent windows from opening more than a few inches.
- Children are constantly moving and should always be supervised to make sure they stay safe.
- It is important to always watch and keep an eye on your child. Turning your head for just a second is enough time for your child to fall and injure themselves.
- Never leave your child alone on any high surface, such as:
 - Changing table
 - Bed
 - Couch or sofa
 - Chair
- If you need to do something and can't hold your child, place them in a crib or playpen until you are done.
- If your home has stairs, install gates at both the top and bottom of the staircases.
 - Gates at the top of the stairs should bolt into the wall for extra safety.
- **Do not** use a baby walker. They can fall or tip over and could seriously injure your child.

If Your Child Has a Fall

If your child does have a fall and is not acting normal, please seek medical care and call your child's medical provider right away.