

# Playground Safety



*Playgrounds are a great place for children to exercise and develop new skills. Unfortunately, more than 213,000 children are treated in emergency departments in the U.S. for playground-related injuries each year.*

## Playground Injury Facts

- Most children who are injured on playgrounds are 2-9 years old.
- Common types of playground-related injuries include broken bones, bruises, cuts and sprains.
- Most injuries happen when a child falls from equipment, especially if onto a hard surface.
- The most common cause of playground-related death is strangulation from clothing, strings or ropes.

## Condition of Equipment

Not all playgrounds are safe. Injuries can be prevented by checking the condition of the equipment and surroundings before play.

- Do not use equipment installed over blacktop, concrete, dirt or grass. Play equipment should have sand, rubber, mulch or other safety surfacing under and around it.
- Stay away from equipment with rust, cracks, rotten areas and loose or missing parts.
- In warm weather, play equipment can get hot enough to cause burns. Check the surface first before allowing children to play.
- Do not allow children to add strings, ropes or pet leashes to playground equipment. These can lead to strangulation.

## Children Younger than 6 Years

Young children do not have the upper arm strength, hand grip size and coordination for some play equipment. The following are **NOT** recommended for children younger than 6 years:

- Free-standing arch climbers
- Seesaws
- Parallel bars
- Log rolls
- Track rides
- Sliding poles
- Spiral slides
- Overhead rings

## Playground Safety Tips

- Remove bike helmets before playing on equipment. Helmets can cause head entrapment and strangulation when used on playgrounds.
- Wear closed-toe shoes during play.
- Do not wear clothing with drawstrings or jewelry around the neck.
- Avoid trampolines, rope swings, swinging exercise rings and trapeze bars.
- Check to make sure play equipment is appropriate for your child's age and ability.
- Always supervise your children on the playground.