

Be prepared for the unexpected. It's never too soon to provide the safest home environment for you and your family. Take the time to double-check smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, replenish emergency kits, look for unsafe conditions and formulate evacuation plans if you haven't already done so. And above all else, prevent accidents before they happen.



# Safety Begins at Home.

## An ounce of prevention helps avoid home accidents ...

Do things have a way of accumulating in your home? Because you are there every day, potential hazards can be overlooked easily. Periodic "proactive" inspections can help you avoid accidents and ensure the health and safety of you and your loved ones. Here are things to watch for:

### HOME EMERGENCY KIT CHECKLIST

- Three gallons of water per person
- Three-day supply of non-perishable food
- First aid kit and medications
- Extra clothing
- Flashlight with batteries
- Radio/weather radio
- Family documents



## Fight fire before it happens.

Whether you are at home or away, fire is always a potential hazard. By the time firefighters arrive, it may be too late—but you can take the following precautions:

- Keep fire extinguishers in the kitchen, garage and patio.
- Only use space heaters with automatic shut offs and never operate them without someone in the room.
- Install smoke/carbon monoxide detectors in all areas. Smoke detectors provide early warning and are your first line of defence. Test them and change batteries regularly. A good way to remember is with spring and autumn time changes.

## Check electrical circuits.

When was the last time you checked your electrical appliances? Be sure to do the following:

- Check for worn or exposed wiring (particularly on lamps) and overloaded circuits.
- Plug computers and televisions into surge protectors.
- Familiarize yourself with the fuse box and circuit panel and place flashlights and batteries nearby.

## Put poisons in their place.

The most prevalent cause of accidental death at home is inadvertent poisoning. You can avoid this by keeping products sealed and out of easy reach from children. Always keep products in their original packaging for quick access to warnings and instructions and discard any expired medications.

Consult your physician or pharmacist for assistance with the following:

- Household cleaners and office supplies
- Medications, vitamins and cooking ingredients
- Garage and garden chemicals

## Take your time with tools.

Don't rush household chores—tools can fight back. Most tools and utensils have sharp edges, particularly knives. Learning how to use them properly can be a valuable safety lesson. Here are a few reminders:

- Cut or stroke away from your body, not toward.
- If you drop a knife or tool, don't try to catch it.
- Don't use tools on live electrical items—unplug them.
- Always use tools in a well-lit area.
- If you get cut or injured, seek first aid immediately.

Take nothing for granted. Children and pets are naturally curious. What makes common sense to you does not to them. Keep potential hazards out of reach and safeguard against the unexpected—a dog can chew through a lamp cord and a child may eat a colourful crayon. Keep child- and pet-specific products with your first aid kit.



**PROTECT  
THE CURIOUS.**



# Safety <sup>IN</sup> THE Home



## CUTS & SCRATCHES

**Minor:** Stop the bleeding by applying direct pressure to the wound with a bandage. Clean the cut with gentle soap and water to reduce risk of infection. Apply antibiotic ointment and a clean bandage to allow cut to properly heal.

**Major:** If the bleeding does not stop, apply additional dressing and bandages with more pressure.

For a serious injury, call 9-1-1.



## SPRAINS

Use the acronym RICE to treat a sprain:

**Rest:** Avoid movement of the injured area.

**Immobilize:** Splint arm or leg if person must be moved and doing so will not cause more harm.

**Cold:** Apply ice to injured area for 20-minute periods to control pain and swelling. Place a thin barrier between ice and bare skin.

**Elevate:** Elevate the injured area or leg only if it does not cause more pain.

For a serious injury, call 9-1-1.



## MINOR BURNS

To care for a minor burn, first put out flames or remove person from the source of heat.

Cool the burn immediately by submerging the area in cold water; do not use ice. Cover the burn loosely with a sterile dressing and avoid using ointment initially.

For a serious injury, call 9-1-1



## FRACTURES

Stabilize the bone immediately to relieve pain and prevent further damage.

Use a newspaper as a temporary makeshift splint or a large towel as a sling. Avoid applying ice directly to the skin and contact emergency services.

Having an air cast in your emergency kit can also be very useful.

In case of leg fractures, the patient's legs can both be tied together. Do not try to straighten the broken limb or move without support.



## CONCUSSIONS

Apply ice to the contact area to reduce swelling. Mild concussions may be treated at home with bed rest, fluids and a mild pain reliever. A doctor should be contacted to assess severity.

Often, concussions are not obvious at first, but it is best to be safe and seek medical treatment to ensure that there are no lasting ill effects.

Call 9-1-1 if the person is unconscious. If conscious, watch the person in case he or she lapses into unconsciousness.

## Things <sup>YOU</sup> SHOULD Have

Check off what you have and immediately get what you need.

- Two pairs of Latex or other sterile gloves (if you are allergic to Latex)
- Sterile dressings to stop bleeding
- Cleansing agent/soap and antibiotic towelettes to disinfect
- Antibiotic ointment to prevent infection
- Burn ointment to prevent infection
- Adhesive bandages in a variety of sizes
- Eye wash solution to flush the eyes or as a general decontaminant
- Thermometer: non-glass and non-mercury
- Prescription medications you take every day such as insulin, heart medicine and asthma inhalers
- Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment and supplies
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever

### ▶ Online Resources:

#### BC Health Guide

[www.bchealthguide.org](http://www.bchealthguide.org)

Has detailed information about any injuries you may sustain at home and features advice for how to treat them.

#### Wikipedia

[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

Encyclopaedia with straightforward content that makes finding those important articles effortless.