

HEALTH MATTERS

Health Officials Offer Holiday Toy Safety Tips

Choking hazard most common problem

This year's widespread publicity about toy recalls has injected confusion into the biggest toy-selling season of the year. Shoppers aren't completely sure what is or isn't safe.

"The most common cause of toy-related deaths and injuries to children under the age of three is choking, so it's important to avoid small toys or those that have small parts," said Adrienne Greene, Safe Kids Oregon coordinator in the Public Health Division.



The Little Tikes keyboard is so loud, when it's placed near a child's ear, it can cause hearing loss.

"Another critical prevention step is to make sure the toy is appropriate for the child's age." While the number of toys re-

potential dangers, Greene said. To ensure purchases are safe, she advises:

-Look for well-constructed toys that are age-appropriate. Read the labels for age and safety recommendations.

-Avoid toys that have small parts or are small. Use an empty toilet paper roll as a handy guide; if toys can slide through, they are too small for children under age 3.

-Avoid toys that have magnets for children under age 6, due to ingestion hazards.

-Avoid buying second-hand toys that may have been recalled and have not removed from circulation.

-When purchasing arts and

crafts materials, buy products that bear the Art and Creative Materials Institute Approved Product seal. This seal identifies art, craft and other creative materials that are safe and non-toxic.

Although recent attention has been placed on the dangers of toys with lead paint, exposure to lead-paint dust from older homes, especially during remodeling or renovation, is the state's most common cause of lead poisoning, says Barbara Zeal, Department of Human Services lead-poisoning-prevention coordinator.

Home lead testing kits are available for anyone who is concerned about lead. However, Zeal cautions kits should only be used as

a screening tool.

"They are only useful for determining if lead is present on the surface of the toy; they won't tell the exact amount of lead in a toy," she said.

Anyone who is concerned about safety issues can get more information and sign up for e-mail recalls at cpsc.gov.

Parents and caregivers are also urged to keep kids protected by making sure toys for older children are kept away from younger siblings at all times, and to actively supervise children playing with any toy that has small parts, moving parts, electrical or battery power, cords, wheels or other potentially harmful components.

HEALTH WATCH

Joint and Arthritis Pain -- Thursday, Dec. 20, from 6:30-8 p.m., learn about treatment options for degenerative joint disease, including total hip- or knee-replacement surgery, exercise and medication regimens. Call 503-692-2411 to register for this free class.

Families Living With Mental Illness -- A free 12-week, life-changing course designed for the families with mentally ill family members begins Jan. 10, from 6 to 8:30 p.m., teaching coping skills, how to deal with crisis and relapse and more. To register, call 503-890-4805 by Dec. 30.

Babysitting Training -- Thursday, Jan. 3 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., the Youth Employment Institute, 1704 N.E. 26th Ave., will host a first aid training class for teens. Participants will receive a first-aid kit for a \$40 fee. To register, call 503-888-2756.

Adult CPR/First Aid Class -- Friday, Jan. 4, from 9 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., the Youth Employment Institute, 1704 N.E. 26th Ave., will host the adult training class. Participants will receive a first-aid kit for a \$47 fee. To register, call 503-888-2756.

Welcome to Medicare -- Make informed Medicare choices, attend the free class to explain Medicare options, Jan. 17, and Feb. 21, from 7 to 9 p.m., at the Bruning Center in Gresham, 1484 N.W. Civic Drive. For registration information, call 503-491-7572.

Mammography Screening -- Early detection is a key factor in the prevention of breast cancer. Call 503-251-6137 to schedule your high-tech, soft-touch mammogram.

Maternity Water Workout -- Helping new moms regain muscle tone, strength, and flexibility, all in the support and freedom of the water. Call 503-256-4000 for more information.

Tenderfoot Care -- Treat your feet with a soak, nail trim, buffing and massage from a licensed nurse at one of six clinics or at your home. Call 503-251-6303 for more information.

Vegetarian Starter Kit -- Healthy vegetarian eating made easier with informational resources, samples, coupons and delicious recipes. Kits are \$7.50 each (includes shipping). To order, call 503-256-4000.

Nutritional Seminars -- New Seasons Market is presenting a series of nutritional seminars at various store locations along with a nutritional help line. For more information, email askthenutritionist@newseasonsmarket.com.

Senior Aerobics -- A low-impact workout geared specifically toward seniors. Call 503-449-0783 for current schedule.

Cardiac-Rehab Exercise Classes -- A medically supervised exercise program for people dealing

with heart conditions. For more information, call 503-251-6260.

Managing Chronic Hepatitis C -- Third Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m., an informative session led by a registered nurse to help manage side effects of medications and dosage preparations and administration; doctors referral required to register call 503-251-6313.

Osteoporosis Screening -- An ultrasound bone density screening with personalized education; fee \$30. To schedule an appointment, call 503-261-6611.

Leg Alert Screening -- Check for peripheral arterial disease with this safe, simple screening using ankle and arm blood pressure. The fee is \$40. To schedule an appointment, call 503-251-6137.

Stroke Alert Screening -- Check your carotid arteries with a painless ultrasound to assess your risk; fee \$40. To schedule a screening, call 503-251-6137.

Parenting Classes -- Newborns don't come with instruction manuals but parents and parents-to-be can learn about a variety of topics from pain and childbirth, to breastfeeding, to infant CPR and much more. For a schedule of events, call 503-574-6595 or visit providence.org/classes.

Cancer Resource Center -- Providence St. Vincent Medical Center and the American Red Cross have joined forces to create the first in-hospital resource center providing books, printed material, computer access and more for individuals and families dealing with cancer. The center is open Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Free Body Basics -- This physician recommended class is appropriate for all ages and health conditions. Plan to attend this one-session class and learn the simple guidelines for safe exercises, including stretching. Call 503-256-4000 to register.

Bereavement Support -- A bereavement support group meets each second and fourth Tuesday, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. To learn more, call 503-251-6192, extension 5670.

Better Breathers -- An asthma educational support group meets on the first Tuesday of the month from 1:15 to 2:45 p.m. at Adventist Medical Center. For more information, call 503-251-6830.

Chronic Pain Support Group -- meets the first Wednesday at 4 to 5:30 p.m. and the third Wednesday of each month, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. For more information, call 503-256-4000.

Heart Talk Support Group -- meets on the second Monday of each month; from 6 to 8 p.m. For more information, call 503-251-6260.

Smoke-Free Support Group -- meets every Monday, 7 to 8 p.m. For more information, call 503-256-4000.

MS Registry to Fight Disease

A registry to identify every person living in the Pacific Northwest who has MS has been launched by the Providence Multiple Sclerosis Center in hopes of finding answers to the disease and better treatment.

"We are hoping every person with MS in the Northwest will sign up for this registry so we can

determine why the MS rate is so high and answer the question - do all MS patients have adequate access to treatment?" said Dr. Stanley Cohan, director of the center.

It does not matter where a person receives health care or if they have insurance. All information will be kept confidential.

Multiple sclerosis is a chronic,

inflammatory disease that affects the central nervous system. It can cause a variety of symptoms including muscle weakness, visual problems, difficulties with coordination and speech, severe fatigue, and cognitive impairment.

Patients wishing to sign up for the MS registry can do so online at providence.org/brain or they can call 503-216-1022 to request a registry form.



Dr. Billy R. Flowers

THE SPINAL COLUMN™

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Part 36. Healing Time

Q: How long will it take until you get well?

A: Your body possesses tremendous healing powers. In fact, by correcting the subluxations which interfere with healing, your chiropractor helps make you well again.

However, your body establishes its own priorities of healing. It is now uncommon for a patient to come in with a history of allergies, sinus trouble, headaches, low back pain, constipations and menstrual irregularity. All at once.

Q: Can you imagine your body healing them all at once?

A: You need to be patient. But, to help you understand which priorities your body may select, your chiropractor will want to know which problems developed first, which bother you the most and whether any might be hereditary.

Your diet and sleep habits could be hindering. Anyone who smokes two packs of cigarettes a day can understand why their lungs aren't clearing up. However, with proper diet, sleep and chiropractic adjustments, you can be sure you're doing everything possible to help your body help you.

And now that you'll understand the role your body plays in healing, you'll understand the role your chiropractor plays.

There are three basic phases of treatment.

1. Eliminating the pain.

Though your chiropractor does not treat pain per se, he or she will work very hard to eliminate any pain you might have. In many instances, it is impossible to make any corrective adjustments on your spine until the pain has been eliminated. During this phase, your chiropractor will need to see you often.

2. Helping your body help itself.

This second phase of treatment is very important. This is when your chiropractor corrects your subluxations, allowing your body to start making the necessary repairs. Ligaments will begin to tone up, muscles will start to provide support again and tissues will cleanse themselves. You may find yourself more alert, less depressed and even desiring healthier food. During this phase of treatment, you will need to see

your chiropractor less often. But be patient and keep all your appointments. Remember, your body is going to repair the worst damage first and even though a different problem may seem more urgent to you, your body will get to it in time.

3. Preventative Maintenance

During this phase, you will probably have forgotten the aches and pains of Phase 1. The important thing, though, is not to forget the need for regular check-ups. To protect the investment you have made in good health and make sure you haven't gotten any new subluxations, which would start the process all over again.

By this time, you will obviously know and appreciate the benefits of proper chiropractic care. And if you're like most people, you want to make sure your friends and loved ones share the same healthy advantage too.

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Without question.

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