



**30 million  
children  
will receive  
emergency care  
this year.**

**They can't all belong to someone else.**

# Will one of these children be yours?

**E**mergencies happen. It could be a fall from a bike... a sudden high fever or seizure... a pot knocked from the stove. What if your child started choking during dinner? What if she was stung by a bee and suddenly couldn't breathe? Would you know what to do?

The American Academy of Pediatrics notes that an emergency exists if you think your child could die or suffer permanent harm unless care is received right away. Most parents feel they are prepared for emergencies because they know when and how to call 9-1-1. But often, that isn't enough. Your child may need care before emergency medical service personnel arrive. And being prepared can assure your child isn't further harmed by doing the wrong thing. We want to help you prepare, because no matter how hard you try to protect your children—emergencies happen.



The right care when it counts.



# Why emergency planning is important.

The first moments after an injury or onset of an illness are often the most critical. The key is remaining calm, knowing what to do, and making a decision to act. Take a look at the following list of potential emergencies, and ask yourself if you'd know what to do—or not to do—to help your child until emergency medical service personnel arrive:

- Loss of consciousness
- Seizure or convulsion
- Choking on food, drink, or object
- Serious fall
- Severe burn
- Firearm wound
- Suffocating
- Difficulty breathing
- Drowning
- Eating or drinking something poisonous
- Heavy bleeding that will not stop
- Injury from a car or bike crash
- High fever
- Diarrhea or vomiting lasting more than 24 hours

If you're like most parents, you would feel comfortable handling some, but not all, of these emergencies. That's why having a written plan is so important. If and when emergencies happen, you'll know who to call, what information you need, where to go, and what to ask. After reading this brochure, talk to your pediatrician or health care provider to decide what's best for your family. Learn what resources are available in your community. Then, use the plan in the back of this guide. Your pediatrician or health care provider can help you customize it to assure your family is well protected. If your child has a serious health problem, you may want to use the American Academy of Pediatrics' detailed Emergency Information Form at [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org).



# Writing down important information can help save your child's life.

**W**hat if you and your child were in a car crash and you couldn't speak? What if your child got sick in day care and you couldn't be reached right away? Emergency medical personnel are going to have questions, and someone has to be able to find answers—fast.

That's why it's so important to have information about your children written down. In the back of this brochure, you'll find an easy-to-use emergency plan. After you complete it, here's what to do:

- Put your emergency plan on the refrigerator
- Put a copy by every phone in your house
- Give a copy to day care providers, relatives, and babysitters
- Give a copy to the school nurse
- Give a copy to neighbors, friends, and coworkers
- Put a copy in your purse, glove compartment, and child's backpack
- Send a copy to your local fire/EMS department

The more people who have this information, the better off your child will be in an emergency.

## Ten ways to be better prepared.

- 1. CHECK IF 9-1-1 IS THE RIGHT NUMBER TO CALL.** Some areas of the country do not have 9-1-1. Others have E-9-1-1 where your address is automatically stored in a database. Make sure you know what's available where you live and work.
- 2. KEEP A WELL-STOCKED FIRST-AID KIT ON HAND.** From minor cuts and bruises to sunburn and sprains, a good first-aid kit is a great first line of defense. To learn what makes a good first-aid kit, contact your health care provider, local pharmacy, or the American Red Cross.

**3. MAKE A LIST OF EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS.** Write down the numbers you need in the emergency plan in the back of this brochure.

**4. TEACH YOUR CHILDREN WHO TO CALL AND WHAT TO SAY.**

Make sure your children know where the phone numbers are for emergency help and poison control. If they call 9-1-1, the operator will ask, "Fire, Police, or Ambulance/Rescue?" Tell your child to stay on the line while the call is transferred. When the appropriate agency picks up, the emergency operator will ask for name, address, telephone number, and details. He or she will want to know what has happened, when it happened, where it happened, and who is involved. Teach your child not to hang up unless told to do so. The emergency operator may be able to offer help over the phone.

**5. MAKE SURE YOUR HOUSE NUMBER IS VISIBLE FROM THE STREET.**

Make it easy for police, fire officials, or emergency medical personnel to find your house. Put large house numbers in a highly visible area. Make sure the numbers are well-lit and can be seen at night. Make sure they can be seen from the street in either direction.

**6. KEEP A CLEAR AND UP-TO-DATE RECORD OF IMMUNIZATIONS.**

This can help doctors do a better job of diagnosing a problem in an emergency. For example, if your child has a bad infection, and the doctor knows your child has been vaccinated against Hepatitis, the doctor can rule that out. This can save time.

**7. WRITE DOWN MEDICAL CONDITIONS, MEDICATIONS, AND DOSAGES.** The emergency plan in the back of this brochure has space for you to write this information down. Being prepared in advance can help assure proper treatment and prevent serious drug interactions.



**8. MAKE A LIST OF ALLERGIES AND REACTIONS.** The emergency plan also includes a place to write this information down. It will help ensure that health care professionals don't use medicines that can hurt your child. And, it might help emergency medical personnel find a reason for problems such as seizures or shortness of breath. If any of your children have severe drug allergies or chronic conditions, we recommend they wear Medical I.D. bracelets.



- 9. IF YOU HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE, CHECK YOUR EMERGENCY COVERAGE.** Check your policy in advance. Some insurance companies require that you call first for approval. Make sure you understand your policy, and carry all necessary cards and phone numbers with you.
- 10. TAKE FIRST-AID CLASSES.** A basic class will teach CPR and proper ways to treat burns, wrap sprains, apply splints, and perform the Heimlich maneuver. Remember, if you take time now, you won't lose precious time when your child's life could depend on it. It's a good idea to ask everyone who takes care of your children to take these classes, including babysitters, relatives, and day care providers. Your pediatrician, local hospital, fire department, and local chapter of the Red Cross can tell you about classes.

## Ten steps to take in an emergency.

- 1. CALL 9-1-1 IMMEDIATELY.** Most people say they will call 9-1-1 when faced with a real emergency, but sometimes they don't. Why? They may not want to "bother" anyone, or they're worried that the situation isn't really an emergency. Instead, they call their pediatrician, the emergency room, or some other health care professional. You should know that the time spent waiting for a doctor to return your call could make a big difference to your child's life. Advice given over the phone is not always correct. The fact is, no one can tell what's wrong without first seeing the patient. That's why it's important to get your child in front of a health care professional as soon as possible. We recommend that you don't drive to the hospital yourself unless you really have to. If you must drive, choose a hospital that serves children, if possible. Remember, it's usually faster, safer, and smarter to call 9-1-1.
- 2. CALL POISON CONTROL IMMEDIATELY.** A poison can hurt your child if he or she swallows it, breathes it in, or splashes it on the skin or in the eyes. Get expert help by calling the Poison Control Center right away. The number is 1-800-222-1222, 24 hours a day.
- 3. IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY INJURED, DO NOT MOVE YOUR CHILD.** In a case such as a car crash or a really



bad fall, moving your child could result in permanent injury. Unless your child is in further danger, keep him or her warm, still, and awake, if possible, until help arrives.

4. **KNOW HOW TO TREAT YOUR CHILD IN CASE OF A BURN.** For minor burns without blisters, soak the burned area in cold water until the pain is gone. DO NOT use ice, butter, petroleum jelly, or other home cures. For burns with blisters, call your doctor right away. For large and/or deep burns, call 9-1-1. Keep your child warm and still until help arrives.
5. **BE PREPARED IF YOUR CHILD HAS A SEIZURE.** If your child is not breathing, begin rescue breathing and have somebody call 9-1-1. If you don't know how to perform rescue breathing, the emergency operator can tell you what to do. If your child is breathing, turn your child on his or her side. Help protect your child from further harm by moving objects out of the way. DO NOT prop up your child's head or put anything in your child's mouth.
6. **KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS BLEEDING.** For really bad wounds or spurting blood, call 9-1-1 right away. Have your child lie down and apply firm, direct pressure to the wound. If the pad becomes soaked, put another one on top of it. DO NOT use tourniquets. If possible, raise the wound higher than your child's heart.
7. **KNOW HOW TO HELP A CHILD WITH A BROKEN BONE.** Call 9-1-1 immediately. Try to keep the injured limb from moving. Apply cold compresses to minimize swelling (NOT ICE). If a bone is sticking out from the skin, cover it with a large bandage, but DO NOT try to push it back in. If there is a lot of bleeding, use direct pressure around the area. DO NOT try to move your child unless he or she is in immediate danger.
8. **DO NOT ADMINISTER THE HEIMLICH MANEUVER OR CPR UNLESS YOU ARE TRAINED.** Call 9-1-1 right away. The emergency operator can tell you how to help your child until help arrives.
9. **HAVE YOUR EMERGENCY PLAN ON HAND.** Be prepared to give emergency medical personnel important information. Use the emergency plan included in this brochure to write down everything you will need.



**10. MAKE IT EASY FOR EMERGENCY PERSONNEL TO FIND YOU.**

Turn on all the lights in your house. Have someone wait outside, if possible, to show fire, police, or emergency medical personnel where your child is.

## Be prepared.

We hope you will keep this brochure handy as a quick reference in case of an emergency. We urge you to complete the emergency plan included here. Ask your pediatrician or health care provider to help you complete a plan for each of your children. If your child has a serious health problem, you may want to use the American Academy of Pediatrics' detailed Emergency Information Form at [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). If you would like to learn more about being prepared, one of the most informational-packed websites is the Federal Emergency Management Agency's [www.Ready.gov](http://www.Ready.gov) (and [www.Listo.gov](http://www.Listo.gov), the Spanish language version). Launched in 2003, the website is designed to educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to emergencies including natural and man-made disasters. The site also includes Ready Kids, a tool to help parents and teachers educate children ages 8 to 12 about emergencies and how they can help get their family prepared.

More information about the EMSC Program is available at [www.emscnrc.org](http://www.emscnrc.org).



# MY EMERGENCY PLAN

Put this on your refrigerator. Put a copy by every phone in your house. Give a copy to day care providers, relatives, and babysitters. Give a copy to the school nurse and the local fire/EMS department. Give a copy to neighbors, friends, and coworkers. Put a copy in your purse, glove compartment, and child's backpack.

## Where I Can Be Reached

Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Work Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone/Pager \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Work Address \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone/Pager \_\_\_\_\_

## Numbers Of People I Can Call

Emergency \_\_\_\_\_

Poison Control \_\_\_\_\_

Fire \_\_\_\_\_ Police \_\_\_\_\_

Ambulance/Rescue \_\_\_\_\_

Pediatrician/Primary Care Physician \_\_\_\_\_

Local Hospital/Urgent Care Center \_\_\_\_\_

Reliable Neighbor \_\_\_\_\_

Nearest Relative \_\_\_\_\_

## Other Things I Might Need

Closest Emergency Care Center \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Plan Provider and Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_

Any Poisons in the Home \_\_\_\_\_



# About My Child

Place  
child's photo  
here.

(Please photocopy if you have additional children.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Nickname \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_

Any Allergies? \_\_\_\_\_

Any Medical Conditions? \_\_\_\_\_

Any Medications/Doses? \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Last Tetanus Shot? \_\_\_\_\_

Age-Appropriate Immunizations Up To Date? \_\_\_\_\_

Any Hospitalizations? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

Glasses or Contacts? \_\_\_\_\_ Orthodontics or Dentures? \_\_\_\_\_



