



Above all remember:
Non-powder guns
ARE NOT TOYS!

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Safety Series

Non-Powder Guns Safety

(BB, Pellet, Paintball)



*Helping you, as a parent,
to make healthy and safe choices.*





The questions and answers in this brochure are designed to help you, as a parent, make healthy and safe choices for your children.

What is a “non-powder gun”?

A “non-powder gun” is a gun that does not need gun powder to fire. Instead, it uses compressed air or other gases, springs, or electricity to fire. This includes BB guns, paintball guns, airsoft guns and pellet guns.

What are the different types of non-powder guns?

Non-powder guns differ in size, shape and color, and they each shoot a different type of ammo:

- » BB guns fire ball bearings (BB’s), which are small, round metal balls.
- » Pellet guns fire small pellets, usually made of lead, which vary in shape.
- » Paintball guns fire paintballs, which are small gelatin balls filled with paint.
- » Airsoft guns fire small, plastic pellets.

Is there an age limit for the use of non-powder guns?

Children under 18 should always have an adult with them when using non-powder guns. Children must be at least 10 years old to play at most paintball fields, and if they are under 18, they will need their parent’s consent. You must be at least 18 to buy a BB gun or airsoft gun.

Where should non-powder guns be used?

Non-powder guns should never be taken out in public. There are areas for the operation of these guns, such as paintball fields, where their use is controlled and supervised.

What kind of safety equipment is available?

- » It is very important that the eyes and face are protected when using a non-powder gun.
- » There are special masks for playing paintball. These masks should also be worn when a child is using the other types of non-powder guns.
- » Paintball companies also offer chest protectors, knee and shin guards, elbow pads, neck protectors, athletic cups, gloves, etc., to help protect the body. This equipment is also be good for airsoft games.

What are some tips for teaching my child safe use?

- » There should always be an adult watching when a child is using a non-powder gun.
- » Make sure your child is always wearing their face mask when they are around any non-powder guns.
- » Always treat a gun as if it is loaded. This means no pointing the gun at others and no looking down the barrel.
- » When firing at their target, always know what is behind, beyond and around it.

- » Keep their finger off of the trigger until they are ready to fire.

Non-powder guns are not as dangerous as real firearms, are they?

Yes, they are. From 1990 to 2000, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reported 39 non-powder gun related deaths. At Nationwide Children’s Hospital we have seen multiple serious non-powder gun injuries. Many people make the mistake of treating non-powder guns as toys, but they are actually weapons. They cause serious injury if the proper safety measures are not taken.

Are there any special precautions one should take when keeping a non-powder gun in the home?

- » Always keep the gun unloaded when it is not being used.
- » Keep it in a safe place and make sure your child will have to go to an adult before using the gun.
- » Be aware of the local and federal laws for the use of your BB, pellet, airsoft or paintball gun.

