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Childhood: Falls From Cribs Injure Dozens a Day

By **RONI CARYN RABIN**

A crib should be a safe place to leave an infant, but every day dozens of babies are injured in falls from cribs, according to what may be the first study focusing on nonfatal crib-related injuries in children younger than 2.

In 9 of 10 cases, the child was alone when the fall occurred; most of the injuries were to the head and neck.

Injuries increased with the children's age, said the paper's senior author, Dr. Gary A. Smith, director of the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. "As the child gains mobility, they're able to climb out," Dr. Smith said.

Caregivers are supposed to adjust the height of the mattress when babies start to pull themselves up, but Dr. Smith said parents might be "caught off guard — the child is not standing one day, and then the next day off they go."

The study, published in the journal *Pediatrics*, analyzed nationally representative data gathered by the **National Electronic Injury Surveillance System** for 181,654 injuries related to cribs, playpens and bassinets from 1990 through 2008.

Of those injured, 2,140 children, or 1.2 percent, died — most from becoming caught or wedged in the crib.

Beginning in June, new mandatory safety standards go into effect for cribs, including a ban on traditional drop-side railings.