Health e-Hints™

It's like having a pediatrician in your inbox.

Parents love our e-newsletter because it offers all the information needed–and only the information needed. Not only is it free, but our e-newsletter can also be customized for your family–the content grows with your child, so when she's 2, you're reading about potty training, and when she's 5, you're reading about going to kindergarten. Written by pediatric specialists, Health e-Hints™ will be your trusted resource.

Sign up today for this free service at
www.NationwideChildrens.org/HealtheHints

© 2012 Nationwide Children's Hospital, Inc., Columbus, Ohio.
No portion can be duplicated without permission.

Nationwide Children's Hospital
700 Children's Drive | Columbus, OH 43205
NationwideChildrens.org

NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.℠

Safety Series

Baby Safety

Preventing baby walker injuries

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

NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.℠

6872

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

Are baby walkers safe?

No! children ages 4 and under are treated in hospital emergency rooms each year for baby walker-related injuries. These injuries happen because baby walkers allow children to do things too soon. The height and speed of a baby walker increases the chance of children:

- Reaching counter tops, shelves, stove tops, etc.
- Falling down stairs, into swimming pools, bathtubs and fireplaces.

The most common injuries are head injuries, followed by broken arms and legs.

Isn't it true that children who get hurt in baby walkers have inattentive parents?

Absolutely not! A baby in a walker moves three feet per second. Even the most attentive parent may take their eyes away from a child for such a short period of time.

Do baby walkers help with development?

No! Baby walkers do not help babies walk earlier. While in baby walkers, babies use the muscles in the back of their legs and walk on their tiptoes. True walking, as well as crawling, requires the use of both the front and back leg muscles. If children are put in walkers, they do not have the chance to learn to crawl—an important step toward walking.

Baby walkers can delay when a baby sits, crawls or walks without help. They can slow mental and motor development.

Do baby walkers help balance?

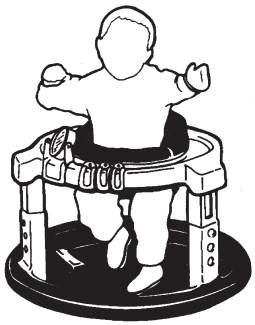
No! The baby's position in a walker causes her to lean forward from the hip. Also, the child does not have to balance herself in a walker. Whether a baby tips to the side or forward, the walker will catch her from falling.

What are safe ways for my child to have fun?

Stationary activity centers, Playpens, baby swings and high chairs are all great options. However, children should never be left alone, even when using a walker alternative.

If you already own a baby walker, take the wheels off. The alternative to a baby walker looks similar to a baby walker, but has no wheels and a dish base. Check with your local toy store to find out more about these walker alternatives (*shown below*).

Remember, if you put your child in a swing or high chair, always buckle his or her seat belt.



Alternative to baby walker as described above.