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Toy Safety Tips Help Protect Kids

Experts offer precautions for parents and gift-givers alike

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THURSDAY, Dec. 15 (HealthDay News) – Toys are a major part of children's fun and excitement during the holiday season, so parents and others need to make sure the toys are safe, experts say.

Read all warning labels carefully before buying a toy and consider the child's age, interests and skill levels, advise doctors at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

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Among their other recommendations and warnings:

- Select toys with sturdy construction and avoid those with sharp edges and points.
- For children under age three, choose toys that are at least one inch in diameter and two inches long so they will not lodge in the child's throat or mouth.
- Don't buy toy jewelry that may contain lead or cadmium. Both are toxic metals that can harm children.
- Choking is a leading cause of toy-related deaths and most of these choking-related deaths are caused by toy balls, latex balloons and small magnets.
- Toys with pull strings longer than 12 inches could pose a strangulation risk for babies.
- Don't give children under age 10 toys that need to be plugged into an electrical outlet. Instead, give them battery-operated toys.
- Be careful with toys that require button batteries. If swallowed, these batteries can become lodged in the esophagus, resulting in serious injury or death.
- Keep older kids' toys away from younger children.
- Some toys contain high-power magnets. If a child swallows more than one of these magnets, they can attract each other and cause serious injury or death. Seek medical help if you child swallows one or more magnets.

More information

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has more about [toy safety](#).

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