

syndrome is wholly supine ([American Academy of Pediatrics, Task Force on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, 2011](#)). No pillows should be placed in a young infant's crib while the infant is sleeping. A firm sleep surface without soft bedding in a shared room (not a shared bed), and the avoidance of overheating and exposure to tobacco smoke, alcohol, and illicit drugs further increase the safety of an infant's sleeping environment.

Toys

Toys play a vital role in the everyday lives of children, and they are no less important in the hospital setting. Nurses are responsible for assessing the safety of toys brought to the hospital by well-meaning parents and friends. Toys should be appropriate to the child's age, condition, and treatment. For example, if the child is receiving oxygen, electrical or friction toys or equipment are not safe because sparks can cause oxygen to ignite. Inspect toys to ensure they are nonallergenic, washable, and unbreakable and that they have no small, removable parts that can be aspirated or swallowed or can otherwise inflict injury on a child. All objects within reach of children younger than 3 years old should pass the choke tube test. A toilet paper roll is a handy guide. If a toy or object fits into the cylinder (items $<1\frac{1}{4}$ inches across or balls $<1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter), it is a potential choking danger to the child. Latex balloons pose a serious threat to children of all ages. If the balloon breaks, a child may put a piece of the latex in his or her mouth. If it is aspirated or swallowed, the latex piece is difficult to remove, resulting in choking. Latex balloons should never be permitted in the hospital setting.

Preventing Falls

Falls prevention begins with identification of children most at risk for falls. Pediatric hospitals use various methods to identify a child's risk of falls ([Child Health Corporation of America Nursing Falls Study Task Force, 2009](#)). After a risk assessment is performed, multiple interventions are needed to minimize pediatric patients' risk of falling, including education of patient, family, and staff.

To identify children at risk of falling, perform a fall risk assessment on patients on admission and throughout