

Name of Child: _____ Date: _____

Why You Should Not Use a Baby Walker

Baby walkers make learning how to walk take longer:

- In a walker, babies do not learn how to hold up their weight.
- Walkers do not support babies' backs. Babies do not learn how to hold their backs up straight.
- In the walker, babies do not learn how to balance to keep from falling.
- Babies cannot see their feet in a walker. This is a problem because children learn to walk by feeling and seeing.
- Babies often stand on their toes when in walkers. Children with cerebral palsy and those who were born too early (premature) need to learn how to walk on their feet, not toes.
- The muscles that babies use to move the walkers are different than the muscles that are used for standing and walking. The movement patterns are different, too.
- Being in a walker does not allow for babies to learn and practice going from the floor to a standing position. This does not allow for babies to develop the leg strength needed for pulling up to the standing position, standing alone, and walking.
- If a baby is too young to hold him or herself up and is put into a walker, that baby may lean forward or bend back, and have trouble breathing.

Baby walkers are not safe:

A child in a walker can get away from the parent's sight quickly. Children get hurt when they fall down stairs, tip into pools, fall off decks and patios, and tip on toys or rugs when in walkers.

Your child would be safer in a playpen than in a walker.



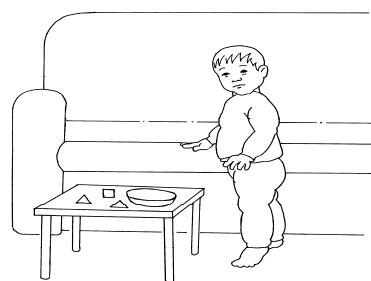
Help your child hold on to sturdy furniture and learn to balance.

Baby walkers do not teach children how to walk:

Most children do not have baby walkers, and they learn how to walk anyway.

Here are some ways you can help teach your child to walk:

- When your child can hold his or her weight while standing, help your child learn to balance by having him or her:
 - learn to pull up from sitting to standing.
 - stand by the couch.
 - hold on to sturdy furniture or the wall and move around a room.



Children learn how to walk when they hold on to sturdy furniture and move around a room.

Caution: Always make sure furniture and TVs are secure and cannot fall onto your child.



Help your child learn how pull up to standing.

Now that you've read this:

- Tell your nurse or doctor why you should not use a baby walker. (Check when done.)
- Tell your nurse or doctor how you will help your child learn to walk. (Check when done.)



If you have any questions or concerns,
 call your child's doctor or call _____

If you want to know more about child health and illness,
visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital
1919 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016
602-933-1400
866-933-6459
www.phoenixchildrens.org
Facebook: [facebook.com/theemilycenter](https://www.facebook.com/theemilycenter)
Twitter: @emilycenter
Pinterest: [pinterest.com/emilycenter](https://www.pinterest.com/emilycenter)

Disclaimer

The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children's Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.

September 9, 2016 • DRAFT to family review
#724 • Written by Karen Wright, MSPT • Updated by Heidi Purrington, MSPT
Illustrated by Greg Bishop and Dennis Swain

Why You Shouldn't Use a Baby Walker or Exersaucer

Name of Health Care Provider: _____

Date returned: _____ db

Family Review of Handout

Health care providers: Please teach families with this handout.

Families: Please let us know what you think of this handout.

Would you say this handout is hard to read? Yes No

easy to read? Yes No

Please circle the parts of the handout that were hard to understand.

Would you say this handout is interesting to read? Yes No

Why or why not?

Would you do anything differently after reading
this handout? Yes No

If yes, what?

After reading this handout, do you have any
questions about the subject? Yes No

If yes, what?

Is there anything you don't like about the drawings?

Yes

No

If yes, what?

What changes would you make in this handout to make it better or easier to understand?

Please return your review of this handout to your nurse or doctor or send it to the address below.

The Emily Center
Health Education Specialist
Phoenix Children's Hospital
1919 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016-7710

602-933-1395

Thank you for helping us!