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*Information for You from Your Health Care Team*

**Trampolines: Injury Machines**



Warmer weather is on the way and kids will be getting back outside to play. With that in mind, parents should know that their kids are playing safely – and trampolines are just not safe! Trampolines can cause serious injuries and even death.

From 1990 to 1996 the sale of trampolines increased drastically – and so did the number of trampoline injuries. In fact, in 1996 there were estimated to be over 80,000 trampoline injuries that needed medical care outside the home. Many times the injuries were minor, including strains, sprains, scrapes, cuts and bruises. Often, though, the injuries were more serious. Broken bones occurred in 30% of the injuries and sometimes required hospitalization and/or surgery. Serious injury to the head and neck is rare, but can occur, and can result in spinal cord injury, paralysis, or brain injury, with permanent disability or death. In the 1990's there were 11 reported deaths caused by trampoline injuries.

Most of these injuries occurred on home trampolines. Jumpers were injured both falling off and falling onto the trampoline. Many of the injuries occurred when there was more than one person jumping at a time. Having protective netting in place may decrease injuries from falling off the trampoline but will not decrease injuries that occur from falling onto the surface of the trampoline. Having an adult present for supervision is not a guarantee that children will be safe from injury while on the trampoline. More than half of trampoline injuries occur while a child is being watched by an adult.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents not put their children's health and safety at risk. In spite of all the safety steps that could be taken, the risk of serious injury is too high. They recommend that parents never purchase a trampoline for home use and never allow children to use a home trampoline. They also state that trampolines should never be a part of routine physical education classes in schools, that trampolines have no place in outdoor playgrounds, and that they should never be regarded as play equipment.

So, if you don't have a trampoline yet, good for you – don't bother. If you already have a trampoline, it's best to just get rid of it. Make sure you know what your kids are doing when they go to their friends' houses to play. If their friends have a trampoline, don't let your kids jump on it.

We at University Pediatric and Adolescent Center are not willing to take the risk either – the health and safety of our children is just too important.

For more information on trampoline injuries from the American Academy of Pediatrics visit their website at: [www.aap.org/policy/re9844.html](http://www.aap.org/policy/re9844.html)

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