



Should you have any concerns regarding your child's development, please do not hesitate to contact your local physiotherapy department:

**Currently based in:**

**Corduff Primary Care Centre,  
Blackcourt Road,  
Blanchardstown,  
Dublin 15**

**Phone: 01 7956761**

**And**

**Grangegorman Primary Care Centre,  
Upper Grangegorman Road,  
Dublin 7**

**Phone: 01 8676236**

**Further Information:**

The European Child Safety Alliance:  
<http://www.childsafetyeurope.org>

The European Consumer Voice in  
Standardisation:  
[www.anec.eu](http://www.anec.eu)

Health Service Executive:  
<http://www.hse.ie/eng/health/child/childsafety/babywalker.html>



**Community Physiotherapy Department  
HSE Dublin North West**



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive



# BABY WALKERS: SAFETY ADVICE

## What is a baby walker?

Baby walkers are a non-essential nursery product made of a seat surrounded by a rigid frame which is set on wheels. A baby that is too developmentally young to walk can move rapidly around a room by pushing against the floor with its legs while seated upright. Most walkers also have a tray with toys or rattles attached, and many can be compacted for portability.



## Why should I choose not to use a baby walker with my child?

Babies using baby walkers are at higher risk of head injury, falls, burns, scalds, and poisonings.

Baby walkers serve no beneficial function for children.

Baby walkers do not help babies learn to walk – research has shown that they cause walking and developmental delay.

Babies who spend time in baby walkers tend to learn to walk on their toes.

## Why are falls from baby walkers so dangerous?

Falls from baby walkers tend to be more dangerous because:

1. A baby in a walker is top-heavy and will most likely tip over, leaving the head more vulnerable to impact.
2. The baby is unable to free himself from the walker or to fall naturally.
3. The speed and momentum the baby can generate in a walker causes harder impacts.
4. Even homes without stairs pose risks, as walkers can tip over when they collide with objects lying about, furniture, or uneven flooring.



## How do baby walkers lead to burns and scalds?

Babies placed in baby walkers sit higher and are able to reach much further. The child cannot move or turn away from the heat source while trapped in the baby walker.

Most baby walker related burns and scalds occur when the child pulls a kettle, pot or hot drink onto itself, or tips into a heating source.

## What if I supervise my child?

Never use a baby walker with your child, even if you are supervising them. Diligent supervision alone is not likely to reduce injury because the rate of mobility, which can reach speeds of 1 metre per second, is faster than an adult can react to prevent the injury.



## Alternatives to baby walkers

A play pen: the floor is the best place for your baby to learn and develop their motor skills.

A stationary activity centre: an activity centre that is **NOT ON WHEELS** is safer.

