

FACT SHEET: Choking Hazards

Children under the age of 4 should not be offered foods that are round, hard, small, thick and sticky, smooth, compressible, dense, or slippery. Caring for Our Children Standard 4.5.0.10

EXAMPLES OF HAZARDOUS FOODS

- hot dogs (food that is the most common cause of choking) and other meat sticks, whole or sliced into rounds
- hard candy
- peanuts and other nuts
- seeds
- raw peas, raw carrot rounds
- hard pretzels or chips
- rice cakes
- whole grapes
- popcorn
- spoonfuls of peanut butter
- marshmallows
- chunks of meat larger than can be swallowed whole



Remember: Children should be seated and supervised while eating.

EASY WAYS TO MAKE FOODS SAFER

Food

Kind of Change

Hot dog	Substitute a more nutritious food; if hot dogs must be served, cut them in quarters lengthwise, then cut the quarter lengths into small pieces.
Whole grapes	Cut in half lengthwise
Nuts	Chop finely
Raw carrots	Chop finely or cut into thin strips
Peanut butter	Spread thinly on inch sized pieces of cucumber, fruit or bread mix with applesauce and spread thinly on bread
Fish or meat with bones	Carefully remove the bones and cut into small pieces

NON-FOOD CAUSES OF CHOKING CARING FOR OUR CHILDREN STANDARD 6.4.1.2

- latex balloons (the most common cause of non-food item causing choking)
- small objects, toys, and toy parts (per Consumer Product Safety Commission, less than 1.25" in diameter and between 1" and 2.25" deep; some recommend a more stringent limit of keeping objects away from young children that have a diameter of less than 1.75")

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. 2011. *Caring for our children: National health and safety performance standards; Guidelines for early care and education programs*. 3rd Edition. Elk Grove Village, IL: AAP; Washington, DC: American Public Health Association.
STD 4.5.0.10: Foods that Are Choking Hazards; STD 6.4.1.2: Inaccessibility of Toys or Objects to Children Under Three Years of Age.
Online at: <http://www.nrckids.org>.