

JUMP!?!

We just had the first trampoline related injury of the year come into our office. She is a beautiful active girl who has been a patient of ours for 3 years. Every year I have come across a child who has been injured on a trampoline. So let's look at this a little closer before you let them jump.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) issued warnings as far back as 1977, 1981, and 1999 emphasizing the dangers of trampolines, recommending they not be used at home or in school physical education classes. The kids kept jumping and I want you to see where it got us. A report by Pediatric Neurosurgery done in 2000 stated, "That in 1998 trampolines were responsible for more than 6,500 pediatric neck injuries". According to Consumers Reports in 2003, 98,000 people were treated in emergency rooms due to trampoline use. Of this 98,000, 50,000 of these emergency room visits were children. Right now I am trying to consider if the benefits outweigh the risks. The 2001 Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reports there have been 11 deaths (6 of them under age 5) since 1990.

Gary Smith chairman of AAP's Committee on Injury, Violence, and Poison Prevention, also former Director of Emergency Medicine at Children's Hospital of Columbus, supports a complete ban on home trampolines. He states, "We've seen the number of trampoline related injuries skyrocket in just six years, the trend doesn't show any signs of slowing down. Instead, it's continuing to increase." Did you know that baby-walkers are banned in Canada yet trampolines cause twice as many injuries as baby-walkers! Smith also states, "The injuries sustained were severe injuries to the spinal cord, which usually lead to paralysis and quadriplegia".

Many childhood activities and traumas can cause the vertebrae (bones of the spine) to lose their normal motion and position. Delicate nerve tissue can be damaged resulting in interference in the brain's ability to control associated organs and tissues; we call this Vertebral Subluxation. In order to have the best health possible all of the messages need to get from the brain to the body. Chiropractors find these areas that are not functioning properly and restore proper function allowing your child to have the best health possible.

I have not read anything mentioning the recent use of safety nets decreasing the chance of injury. If you insist on having a trampoline in your backyard, my recommendations are to limit the amount of time children are on the trampoline! Limit the number of people on the trampoline; I would think one at a time would prevent collision. Always have adult supervision. The younger the child the less developed their musculature is and more the reason to not allow or limit young kids from the repetitive trauma of jumping. The repetitive jumping can also compress the discs and supporting tissue of the spine.

Don't get me wrong I would much rather see a child living life playing outside versus rotting and melting their brains with television and video games. I want you to have the facts so you can make informed decisions to raise your children as healthy as possible!



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