

## **Atrium Health Navicent Physicians Offer Tips for Toy and Gift Safety**

*Toy-related injuries led to more than 152,000 emergency room visits in 2021*

**MACON, Ga., Nov. 29, 2022** – Seeing a child's excitement unwrapping toys and other gifts is a magical part of the holiday season. Pediatricians at Atrium Health Navicent Beverly Knight Olson Children's Hospital encourage gift givers to exercise caution when selecting presents for young children.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), in 2021 there were two deaths and more than 152,000 toy-related injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms among children ages 15 and younger. Frequently, these injuries involved cuts and abrasions to the face and head. For children younger than 15 years old, non-motorized scooters were associated with the most injuries.

Pediatricians at Atrium Health Navicent Beverly Knight Olson Children's Hospital offer the following tips for shoppers:

- Look for age-appropriate labels on toys. The toy should suit the age and individual skills and abilities of the child who will receive it, especially if the recipient is younger than 3 years of age.
- Take note of safety warnings, information and labels.
- Avoid toys that shoot, have parts that fly off, have points or sharp edges.
- Make sure that toys are not too loud and will not cause hearing damage if the child holds it to their ear.
- Choose sturdy toys that will not break easily.
- Choose crayons and markers that are designated "nontoxic."
- Toys made with fabric should be labeled as flame resistant or flame retardant. Plush toys should be washable.
- Include protective equipment with sporting equipment. For example, give a helmet and protective padding when giving a bicycle or skates.
- Toys with magnets and button batteries may cause serious injury or death if swallowed. Do not give gifts that contain these or any small parts to children younger than 3 years of age.
- Avoid toys with ropes, cords and heating elements.
- Once gifts are open, immediately discard plastic wrappings or other packaging on toys before they become dangerous playthings.
- Show your children how to use the toy safely, and always supervise children as they play.

"Small pieces increase the risk for choking in small children, so the smaller the child, the larger the toy's pieces should be," said Dr. Edward Clark, medical director for Atrium Health Navicent Beverly Knight Olson Children's Hospital. "If you're giving skates, a bicycle, a scooter or a similar outdoor toy, be sure to include a helmet and other protective equipment so the child can safely try out their new gift."

Older toys may contain lead-based paint. Choose toys that use lead-free paint. As a precaution, parents should educate themselves on symptoms of lead poisoning and be aware of toys that have been recalled due to lead exposure. Parents should contact a physician if they believe their child has been exposed to lead. To check if a toy has been recalled or banned, visit [www.cpsc.gov/recalls](http://www.cpsc.gov/recalls).

If an emergency situation does arise, the Pediatric Emergency Center at Atrium Health Navicent Beverly Knight Olson Children's Hospital was designed specifically for children and families, and is staffed by board-certified pediatric specialists. Located at 888 Pine Street in Macon, care is available 24 hours a day, whenever injury or illness occurs.

### **About Atrium Health Navicent**

Atrium Health Navicent is the leading provider of healthcare in central and south Georgia and is committed to its mission of elevating health and well-being through compassionate care. Atrium Health Navicent provides high-quality, personalized care in 53 specialties at more than 50 facilities throughout the region. As part of the largest, integrated, nonprofit health system in the Southeast, it is also able to tap into some of the nation's leading medical experts and specialists with Atrium Health, allowing it to provide the best care close to home – including advanced innovations in virtual

medicine and care. Throughout its 125-year history in the community, Atrium Health Navicent has remained dedicated to enhancing health and wellness for individuals throughout the region through nationally recognized quality care, community health initiatives and collaborative partnerships. It is also one of the leading teaching hospitals in the region, helping to ensure viability for rural health care for the next generation. For more information, please visit [www.NavicentHealth.org](http://www.NavicentHealth.org).

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