



Trampoline recommendations

August 2015

Introduction: A report by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) in 2002 cautioned against home trampoline use. Current data on netting and other safety equipment indicates no reduction in injury rates. Most injuries occur on the trampoline surface and many occur even with adult supervision. In the USA in 2009, there were an estimated 98,000 trampoline-related injuries resulting in 3,100 hospitalizations. Trampoline equipment does have an acceptable role when used as part of a structured athletic training program with "appropriate coaching, supervision and safety measures in place."

Muthaiga Pediatrics Clinic provides the following recommendations:

1. The trampolines in schools and sports complexes should always have appropriate supervision by trained certified trampoline coaches and safety measures in place.
2. Failed attempts at **somersaults** and **flips** frequently cause cervical spine injuries, resulting in permanent and devastating consequences. Somersaults or high-risk maneuvers should be avoided without proper supervision and instruction; these maneuvers should be done only with proper use of protective equipment, such as a harness.
3. Homeowners with a trampoline should verify that their insurance covers trampoline injury-related claims.
4. Children under 5 years are at greater risk for significant injury, specifically children 5 years of age or younger (**48% of injuries in this age group resulted in fractures or dislocations**).
5. **Use safety nets and pads.** Install a trampoline enclosure — a special net designed to surround the trampoline — and cover the trampoline's springs, hooks and frame with shock-absorbing pads. Regularly check the equipment for tears and detachments.
6. **Place the trampoline on level ground.** Make sure it's a safe distance from trees and other structures. Better yet, place the trampoline in a pit so the jumping surface is at ground level.
7. **Limit trampoline activity.** Allow **only one person** to use the trampoline at a time — and never without supervision. Bounce in the middle of the trampoline. Studies have shown that **multiple person use** is potentially dangerous and the major cause of accidents (75% of injuries) on trampolines because it causes collisions and falls due to the bounce of one person destabilizing another.
8. **Discourage unsupervised jumping.** Don't install a trampoline ladder, which could tempt young children to use the trampoline alone.
9. The supporting bars, strings and surrounding landing surfaces should have adequate protective padding. Equipment should be checked regularly by **a trained person** for safety conditions -to make sure no parts are worn, rusted or broken.
10. **Age limit:** Trampolines are not recommended for children **under 6 years of age**.
11. Make sure trampoline ladders are removed after use to prevent unsupervised access by young children

Doctor's Plaza S2, Gertrude's Children's Hospital, Muthaiga, Nairobi

+254 722 519 863 / + 254 733 668 517 • www.muthaigapediatrics.co.ke • reception@muthaigapediatrics.co.ke