



Listen and choose the correct answer: Accidents and prevention

1. When we use the word *accident*, it may suggest that accidents are **inevitable / preventable**.
2. As health professionals, we should include accident prevention as part of **healthy lifestyle advice / workplace safety training**.
3. The danger of accidents can be minimized by **planning ahead / reacting quickly**.
4. People should be made aware of risks in **daily environments / only during outdoor activities**.
5. The speaker reminds us to think about **vulnerable groups like children and the elderly / those who are physically active**.
6. Once an accident happens, it's **too late to take precautions / still possible to prevent injury**.
7. To avoid falls, stairs and hallways should be **well lit / covered with carpets**.
8. Slipping can often occur because of **loose rugs / uneven lighting**.
9. Gardens with ponds or pools should be covered when **small children / pets** are present.
10. During DIY tasks, people should wear **protective clothing / light and flexible shoes**.

Now read the grammar focus, the text and choose...

Accidents

A In 2004, there were 230 child fatalities due to accidents in England and Wales, the highest numbers being in five- to fourteen-year-olds. The commonest cause of accidental injury in children presenting to UK hospitals is falls. Others include suffocating and choking, burns and scalds, and poisoning. A recent report by the Audit Commission and the Healthcare Commission states that each year there are two million attendances to accident and emergency departments by children as a result of accidents that might have been prevented. Accidents are more common in the lower socio-economic groups.

B Frailty and health problems make the elderly, particularly those over the age of 75, at increased risk of accidents, usually occurring in the home. Falls are the most common cause. Inability to get up after falling puts the person at risk of hypothermia and pressure sores. Hip fractures after falls are a major cause of morbidity and mortality.

C In England and Wales in 2004, there were 3,892 accidental deaths in and around the home. Those most at risk of serious or fatal injury in the home are young children and the elderly. Falls are the most common type of accident.

In 2004, fire brigades attended 442,700 fires in the UK. There were 508 fire-related deaths and 14,600 non-fatal casualties. A large proportion of fires in homes were accidental, the main causes being misuse of equipment / appliances and chip pan fires.

D NICE guidelines were issued in 2004 on the assessment and prevention of falls in older people. They state that older people should be asked routinely if they have fallen in the past year. Those who have fallen, or those considered at risk of falling, should have a multifactorial falls risk assessment and should be considered for interventions including those to improve their strength and balance and remove any home hazards.

During 2005 / 2006 there were 148,713 occupational injuries reported, of which 212 were fatal. All places of work are potentially dangerous whether an oil rig, a coal mine, a factory, an office, or a kitchen. The Health and Safety Executive has stipulated rules about safety in the workplace. It also has the necessary powers to inspect and enforce them. Safety equipment must be worn. Risks must be appreciated. Every workplace should have a safety officer who is responsible for identifying danger and advocating action. As doctors, we have a duty to be aware of measures to prevent infection and needle-stick injury.

Using Modals to Talk about Possibility, Obligation, and Prevention

Modals are auxiliary verbs that express ideas like possibility, necessity, certainty, and advice. They are often used in medical and preventive contexts to discuss risk, responsibility, and probability.

Function	Meaning / Example
Possibility (present or future) <i>may, might, could</i>	These express something that is possible but not certain.  <i>Falls may occur more often in the elderly.</i>  <i>Children might suffer burns if left unsupervised.</i>
Certainty (present or past) <i>must, can't, couldn't have</i>	These show how sure we are about something.  <i>That injury must have been caused by a fall.</i>  <i>It can't be due to infection; there's no redness.</i>
Obligation / Duty <i>must, have to, should</i>	These express what is necessary or strongly recommended.  <i>Doctors must report workplace accidents.</i>  <i>Families should keep stairways well lit.</i>
Advice / Recommendation <i>should, ought to, had better</i>	Used to suggest the best action.  <i>Older people should remove loose rugs to prevent falls.</i>
Permission / Lack of necessity <i>can, may, don't have to</i>	 <i>Staff can use protective equipment if needed.</i>  <i>Patients don't have to stay overnight after minor injuries.</i>

After reading the text carefully, choose the correct option (A or B) for each statement.

Some questions test comprehension; others test the correct use of modals.

1. In 2004, the highest number of accidental child deaths in England and Wales occurred among
A) five- to fourteen-year-olds / B) children under five.
2. Most accidental injuries in children presenting to hospitals are caused by **A) falls / B) choking and poisoning.**
3. According to the report, many accidents leading to emergency visits **A) could have been prevented / B) were unavoidable.**
4. Accidents are more common in the lower socioeconomic groups, which **A) may reflect poorer living conditions / B) must result from carelessness.**
5. The elderly, especially those over 75, **A) are likely to suffer accidents at home / B) must stay indoors to avoid falling.**
6. Inability to get up after falling **A) can lead to hypothermia and pressure sores / B) may cause immediate fractures.**
7. According to NICE guidelines, older people **A) should be asked if they have fallen in the past year / B) must be admitted to hospital after a fall.**
8. Those considered at risk of falling **A) should have a multifactorial risk assessment / B) should be ignored if they feel fine.**
9. In 2004, there were nearly 4,000 accidental deaths in and around the home, **A) including both children and elderly / B) mainly involving young adults.**
10. Most home fires were caused by **A) misuse of appliances and chip pan fires / B) lightning and electrical storms.**
11. The majority of home fires were **A) accidental / B) intentional.**
12. At work, the Health and Safety Executive **A) must ensure that safety rules are followed and can inspect workplaces / B) may give advice but cannot enforce rules.**
13. Every workplace **A) should have a safety officer responsible for identifying risks / B) may depend on workers to report accidents themselves.**
14. Doctors **A) must be aware of how to prevent infection and needle-stick injuries / B) could ignore such risks if experienced.**