

Tis' The Season...for coughs, colds, and the flu!

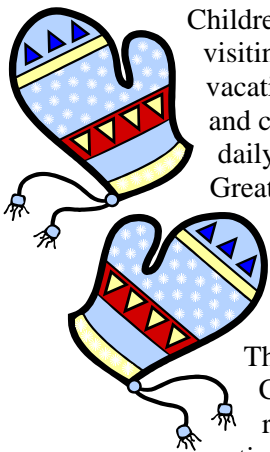


More medications are in the home at this time of year – think prevention!

- Read labels before using a medicine.
- Store in original containers.
- Lock medicine up and keep out of the reach of children, even between uses.
- Turn the lights on at night to ensure use of correct medicine.
- Measure correctly.

Holiday Routines

Did you know that poisonings often happen when routines are disrupted?



Children home from school, visiting relatives, illness, vacations, shopping trips, and celebrations can disrupt daily household routines.

Greater parental supervision may be required during these times to prevent accidental poisonings.

The Connecticut Poison Control Center recommends taking the time to poison-proof

your child's environment so that everyone has a happy and safe winter season.

Carbon Monoxide

Carbon Monoxide is invisible! The colorless, odorless, and tasteless gas is a byproduct of burning organic fuels.

Sources:

- Household appliances and equipment fueled with gas, oils, coal, kerosene or wood.
- Examples: furnaces, water heaters, space heaters, cars, charcoal grills, lanterns, clothes dryers, ovens, fireplaces, lawn mowers, snow blowers, etc.

Causes:

- Malfunctioning appliance or equipment
- Worn or faulty parts
- Improper venting



Symptoms:

- Early symptoms often mimic the flu – headache, nausea, unclear thinking, shortness of breath, weakness, and loss of muscle control.
- Severe symptoms – convulsions, unconsciousness, and possible death.

Prevention:

- Install a carbon monoxide detector.
- Clean and inspect fuel-burning appliances. Use a professional!
- Check for proper ventilation.



Myth: Poinsettias are the most dangerous item in the household during the holiday season.

Fact: Poinsettias are not harmful. However, other plants and berries are unsafe.

Seasonal Plant and Berry Toxicity:

Bayberries - non-toxic

Boxwood - GI irritant, dermatitis

Christmas Cactus – non-toxic in sm. amts.

Christmas Rose – toxic

Holly – has a dozen species; GI irritant

Ivy, English – GI irritant, dermatitis

Jerusalem Cherry – entire plant toxic

Mistletoe, American – any amount is toxic

Pines – GI irritant, dermatitis

Poinsettia – GI irritant in large quantities

Rhododendron – all parts are toxic

Alcohol is one of the worst dangers at this time of year:

- Clean up immediately after parties. Do not let alcohol be a tempting snack for little ones.
- Store presents like perfumes and aftershave out of the reach of children, not under the tree.



Pretty Dangers

- * Most modern ornaments are non-toxic, but may be a choking hazard. Family heirloom or antique ornaments may contain lead.
- * If swallowed, bubble lights may be toxic. Call 1-800-222-1222.
- * Kissing under the mistletoe is O.K. Just don't eat the berries. They are toxic. Call 1-800-222-1222.
- * Lamp oils add ambience to your gatherings, but could be deadly. Choking on hydrocarbons can be toxic to the lungs. Call 1-800-222-1222.
- * Made of spun glass, angel hair is irritating to the eyes and skin, but is not toxic.
- * Artificial snow should be applied in a properly ventilated space to avoid inhaling the fumes. After drying, swallowing a small amount by a curious child is not a problem.



The Connecticut Poison Control Center is a free and confidential service of the University of Connecticut Health Center. Poison information specialists are available 24-hours-a-day, 7 days a week. Call 1-800-222-1222 if you have a poisoning or questions about poisons. TDD toll free 1-866-218-5372. Call (860) 679-3531 to order educational materials.

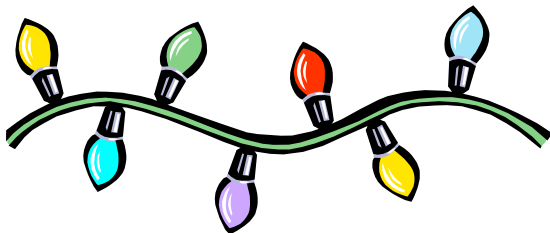
Check out our website for more information about poisons <http://poisoncontrol.uhc.edu>.



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Winter Poison Safety Tips

From the Connecticut Poison
Control Center



University of Connecticut
Health Center