

Poisoning Prevention Tips

Poisoning is the leading cause of all injury deaths and one of the top leading causes of nonfatal injuries treated in hospital emergency departments, totaling over 1 million hospital visits annually.¹ A poison is any substance that can harm someone if it is used in the *wrong* way, by the *wrong* person or in the *wrong* amount.

During the week of March 20-26, 2016, the Poison Prevention Week Council will encourage Americans to learn more about the dangers of unintentional poisonings and to take appropriate preventive measures to avoid them. The Council encourages you to share the following tips and display this poster in a visible location to raise awareness in an effort to reduce poisonings that can cause injuries in the home. In addition, please program the Poison Help line 1-800-222-1222 into your phone.

General Safety Tips

- Use National Poison Prevention Week as a time to raise awareness in your community about ways to prevent unintentional poisonings.
- Use National Poison Prevention Week as the time to inspect your entire home for any medicines or household products that may not be stored properly and correct the situation immediately. Always store medicines and household products up and away and out of sight from children and ensure children can't use chairs or stack items to climb to products stored out of their reach.
- Program the Poison Help number, 1-800-222-1222, into your phone and when you leave your children in a babysitter's care, ensure he/she knows about the number. This national toll-free number works anywhere in the US, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
- Install safety latches on cabinets used for medicines and household products.
- Re-close medicines and other household products after each use. If interrupted during use also remember to close immediately because many incidents happen when adults are distracted when using these products (e.g., by the telephone or the doorbell).
- Teach children to always ask an adult before eating, drinking or touching anything.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors near or in your home's sleeping areas and on every level of the home.

Medicine Safety Tips

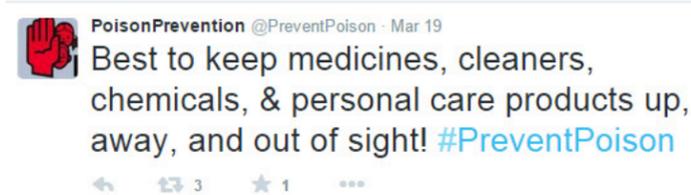
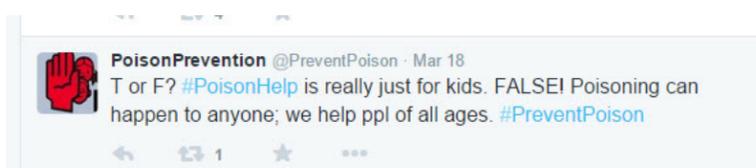
- While at home or while traveling, keep purses, briefcases or bags that contain medicines up high, away and out of sight from your children.
- Buy products in child-resistant packaging whenever possible. But remember, child-resistant is not childproof.
- Read medicine and product labels carefully before each use and follow directions exactly.
- Store all medications in the original packaging.
- Never call medicine "candy" to get a child to take it. Always tell them what it is and why you must be the one to give it to them.
- Never make medication easily accessible to a child by leaving it out on a kitchen counter or at a sick child's bedside.
- When giving or taking medicine, make sure to check the dosage every time and take the correctly prescribed amount.
- Never "borrow" a friend's medicine or take old medicines.
- Tell your doctor what other medicines you are taking so you can avoid harmful or dangerous drug interactions. This includes prescriptions, over-the-counter medicine, vitamins and herbal products.
- Clean out the medicine cabinet periodically, and safely dispose of medicines that are expired or no longer needed.
- Always relock the safety cap on a medicine bottle. If the medicine has a locking cap that turns, twist it until you hear the click or you cannot twist any more.
- Read the labels of prescription and over-the-counter medicine carefully to make sure you are not taking more than one product at a time with the same active ingredient.
- Use only the measuring device (dosing cup, dosing syringe, or dropper) that is included with your medicine. If a measuring device is not included or you do not receive one, ask for one from your pharmacist. Don't substitute another item, such as a kitchen spoon.
- If you don't understand the instructions on the medicine label, or how to use the dosing device (dosing cup, dosing syringe, or dropper), talk to your pharmacist or doctor before using the medicine.
- Monitor the use of medicines prescribed for children and teenagers, such as medicines for attention deficit disorder, or ADD.
- Some medicines are dangerous when mixed with alcohol. Consult your doctor or pharmacist before drinking alcohol if you are taking a prescription or over-the-counter medicine.

Household Product Safety

- Keep cleaning products in their original container with their original label intact.
- Laundry product and other cleaning product labels contain first aid information and are a valuable resource for consumers.
- Always close all household cleaning product containers immediately after use and store them out of children's reach.
- NEVER use food containers such as cups or bottles to store household and chemical products.
- Teach children that laundry and other cleaning products and their containers are not toys.
- Children are usually curious and explore all new things that they find in the home. Take care to keep laundry and other cleaning product out of reach of young children.
- Remove children, pets, and toys before applying pesticides (inside or outside the home). Follow label directions to determine when children and pets can return to the area that has been treated.
- To protect children from exposure to mouse/rat/insect poison, use products with a tamper-resistant bait station.
- Have your child tested for lead. Symptoms of lead poisoning may not be obvious right away, but behavior and learning problems can develop if high levels are left untreated.
- Wash children's hands, toys, pacifiers and bottles often. Store food in a separate area from household cleaning products and chemicals. Mistaking one for the other could cause a serious poisoning.
- Never combine household cleaning products because some chemical mixtures may release irritating gases.
- Make it a practice to check the spray nozzle on products before use to ensure that it is directed away from your face and other people.
- Wear protective clothing, including long-sleeved shirts, long pants, socks, shoes and gloves, when spraying pesticides and other chemicals. Pesticides can be absorbed through the skin and can be extremely poisonous if not used in accordance with label directions.
- Stay away from areas that have recently been sprayed with pesticides or other chemicals.
- Keep batteries out of a child's reach. Contact the poison center right away if a child swallows a battery or a battery is missing from a toy or other household item, no matter how small the battery. Properly dispose of old batteries after they have been removed from an appliance.
- Keep magnetic toys and other magnetic items away from small children. Call the poison center right away if you suspect a child has swallowed a magnet.
- Know the name of all household plants in your home. Remove any poisonous plants from the house and yard.

Join The Conversation Online:

Follow **#PreventPoison** throughout the year to echo our safety messages such as the ones listed below:



About the Poison Prevention Week Council:

Public Law 87-319 (approved September 26, 1961) requested the President annually to designate the third week in March as National Poison Prevention Week. The observance, sponsored by the Poison Prevention Week Council, was designed to alert the American people to the problem of unintentional poisonings. For more than 50 years, National Poison Prevention Week has focused on preventing poisonings in the home.

Poison Prevention Week Council Members:

American Academy of Pediatrics • Alliance for Consumer Education • American Association of Poison Control Centers • American Cleaning Institute • American College of Emergency Physicians • Art & Creative Materials Institute, Inc. • ASTM International • Consumer Healthcare Products Association • Consumer Specialty Products Association • Healthcare Compliance Packaging Council • National Safety Council • U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention • U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission • U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development • U.S. Environmental Protection Agency • U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration

About the Poster Artwork:

For more information about the posters that earned national recognition for the Categories of: Kindergarten through Second Grade; Third Grade through Fifth Grade; and Sixth Grade through Eighth Grade please visit the Poison Prevention Week Council website at poisonprevention.org/. If you have questions or need additional information please email nbock@cleaninginstitute.org.

¹CDC's WISQARS, 2013