

Guide to Poison Prevention

COMMON POISONS AT HOME

The average household has as many as 250 “poisons.” They include common household items such as detergents, bleaches, birth control pills, insecticides, polishes, solvents, and disinfectants.

By taking the proper precautions, the tragedy of an estimated two million annual accidental poisonings can be avoided. Children between the ages of one and three are the most frequent victims of this catastrophe, which may result in permanent damage or death.

The easiest, and sometimes most effective, method of preventing accidental poisoning is to keep hazardous items locked up and out of the reach of children. Sometimes drawing attention to the items only serves to provoke a child’s curiosity. When dealing with older children who are capable of understanding the danger, designate an area to be “off-limits.”

IF AN ACCIDENT DOES HAPPEN

- Don’t panic. It will hinder your ability to think clearly and will frighten the child.
- Identify the suspected poison and the amount taken.
- Immediately contact the Poison Control Center or your family physician.
- If necessary, quickly take the child to the nearest hospital emergency room.
- Bring the package or container of suspected poison with you.



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FIRST AID FOR POISONING

Poisonous Gases:

Minimize exposure by taking the victim to fresh air. Maintain respiration until victim is breathing or help arrives.

Eye Contact:

Rinse immediately with water. Remove contact lenses, then hold lids open and flush eye with water for 10 to 15 minutes. Do not reinsert contact lenses until approved by an ophthalmologist.

Skin Contact:

Remove contaminated clothing. Flush skin thoroughly with water.

Swallowed Poisons:

If patient is unconscious or having symptoms:

1. Transport to medical facility. If you drive, bring someone who can attend to the victim.
2. Bring the container(s) of the substance(s) with you.
3. If vomiting occurs, bring the vomitus.
4. Bring basin to catch vomiting in the car.

If patient is conscious:

1. Separate patient and poison.
2. Induce vomiting if directed.
3. If patient has swallowed kerosene, gasoline, or other petroleum distillates, the physician or poison center may advise vomiting. Do so only if directed.

Do not induce vomiting if:

1. Patient is unconscious or having convulsions.
2. The swallowed poison is a corrosive such as drain cleaner, lye, or acid.

To make patient vomit (never use salt water):

1-10 years of age: Give one tablespoon (1/2 ounce) Syrup of Ipecac followed by a glass of water; if no vomiting in 15 minutes, you may repeat dose (once only) followed by another glass of water.

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10 years of age and older: Give two tablespoons (one ounce) Syrup of Ipecac followed by two glasses of water. If no vomiting occurs in 15 minutes, give another glass of water and gag by touching back of tongue. If no vomiting in 30 minutes, call Poison Control Center again. Obtain Syrup of Ipecac from your pharmacist and keep it at home.

POISON PREVENTION TIPS

- Obtain one ounce of Syrup of Ipecac from your pharmacist and keep it in your home.
- Lock up all medicines and always purchase products packaged in child-resistant containers.
- Don't take medicine in front of children.
- Do not call medicine candy.
- Clean out old medicine bottles regularly and flush the contents down the drain.
- Read and heed directions and caution labels.
- Avoid bringing unnecessary toxic substances into your home.
- Store cleaning supplies out of sight and reach of children.
- Do not store medicines, cleaning agents, or pesticides near food.
- Keep all products in their original containers.
- Rinse out containers thoroughly before disposing of them.
- When you contact the Poison Control Center please have the age and weight of person, name and amount of substance ingested, symptoms, time of ingestion, and location of person.



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IS YOUR HOME POISON PROOF?

A checklist of the most common poisonous products found in the home:

Kitchen:

aspirin, dish soap, scouring powder, ammonia, drain cleaner/lye, furniture polish, carpet cleaners, oven cleaner

Bedroom:

sleeping drugs, cosmetics, jewelry cleaner, perfume

Laundry:

bleach, bluing/dye, laundry detergent, spot remover

Closets, Attic, Storage Places:

rat/ant poison, moth balls/spray

Bathroom:

acetaminophen, deodorant, shampoo/hair products, drain cleaner, nail polish/remover, hand lotion, sun tan lotion, shaving lotion, rubbing alcohol, all drugs and pills, disinfectant cleaners, toilet bowl cleaner, room, deodorizer

Garage, Basement, Workshop:

rust remover, bug killer, turpentine, paint, fertilizer, plaster, lighter fluid, kerosene, gasoline/oil, paint remover, weed killer, antifreeze, metal cleaner, paint thinner

Residential Safeguard Series

- ➔ ABC's of Crime Prevention
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