



Poisoning



Who gets poisoned?

Most commonly, children under 5 years of age. This year in the United States, two million children will swallow a form of poison.

Why mostly children?

Young children are curious. They will eat or drink almost anything—even if it doesn't taste good.

What can be poisonous to your child?

- Medicines
- Vitamins
- Iron supplements
- Cleaning, car and gardening products
- Insecticides
- Cosmetics
- Batteries
- Arts and crafts materials
- Plants



When do poisonings happen?

Anytime! Especially near meal times and when the family's normal routine is changed, such as during vacations, moving, illness, family stress, or when entertaining guests.

Where do poisonings occur?

Anywhere! Most, however, occur in the kitchen or bathroom, often when a parent is in the room, and in the bedroom where pills may be left on a bedside table or in a purse. In case a poisoning does occur, it is important to call Poison Control immediately. To receive emergency telephone stickers and a brochure, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to California Poison Control System, UCSF Box 1262, San Francisco, CA 94143-1262.

Poison prevention tips

- Keep all medicines and dangerous products locked up and out of reach when not in use. Instruct visitors or child care providers to do the same.
- Ask for child-resistant containers for all medications, but remember that child-resistant caps are not truly child proof. The caps only slow them down.
- Never call vitamins "candy" especially when they are sweetened, fruit flavored or shaped like animals or cartoon characters.
- Avoid taking medicine in front of young children because they learn by imitation.
- If you are called away when using a dangerous product, take it with you.
- Make sure young children and pets are kept safely away from projects such as painting, floor stripping, paint removal, pesticide applications or fertilizer use. Use locking cabinets to store paint, pesticides, etc. Try using non-toxic alternatives when possible.
- To prevent lead poisoning keep furniture, walls window sills, blinds and other painted surfaces in good repair. Keep children away from flaking or chipping paint. Have old paint tested for lead – new paints are lead-free.
- Never transfer dangerous products into food or beverage containers. Each year children are poisoned by drinking poisonous items which were poured into a cup, a glass or a soda can.
- Do not mix chemicals. Read product precautions before use and take warnings seriously. First aid information on labels can be wrong, so if a poisoning occurs, contact the Poison Control Center.
- Identify plants around your home. Get a safe plant list from the Poison Control Center. Teach children not to put any part of plants in their mouths.
- Do not use syrup of ipecac or activated charcoal. Have the poison control number on the telephone; get a sticker from the Poison Control Center.



Provided by California Childcare Health Program
For more information, please contact:
Healthline 1-800-333-3212

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**For poisoning emergencies
or information,
call (800) 876-4766.**