

		Central New York Poison Center
1-800-222-1222		

Poison Prevention

Newsletter

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 SUNY Upstate Medical University
University Hospital • 750 East Adams Street • Syracuse, NY 13210

Antihistamines, Decongestants and Cough Medications

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For the treatment of allergies and colds the most common over the counter medicines contain either an antihistamine

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Teaching children about poison prevention

Lee W. Livermore

Kids love to learn one way to make learning fun is to involve them in poison proofing your home. Offer rewards for the person who can name the most poisons or the best poison safety idea.

Become a sleuth and make it fun. In the popular TV program "Blues Clues", every program focuses on looking for the paw print to collect clues and solve a problem or mystery. Together you can solve a potential problem by looking for poisonous products in your home. Reward your child for his/her discovery and where explaining why this product can be harmful. Don't forget to teach them to use it properly. See the "Billie Checklist" provided in this issue

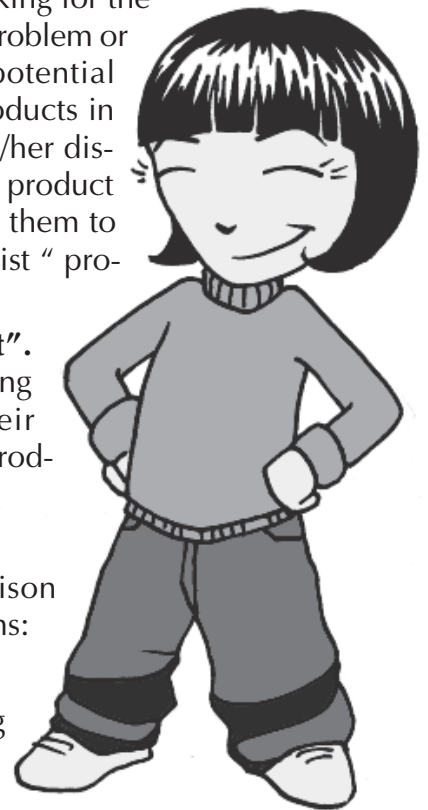
Teach your children to "ask first". Help your child learn the habit of "asking first" before putting anything in their mouth or before touching and using products in and around the house.

Safety Teaching Tips:

When teaching children about poison safety, consider the following questions:

What is a poison?

Answer: A poison is something that can cause sickness or even death if taken into the body.



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**Poison emergency?
Poison information?
Call Us!
Visit us on the web:
www.cnypoison.org**

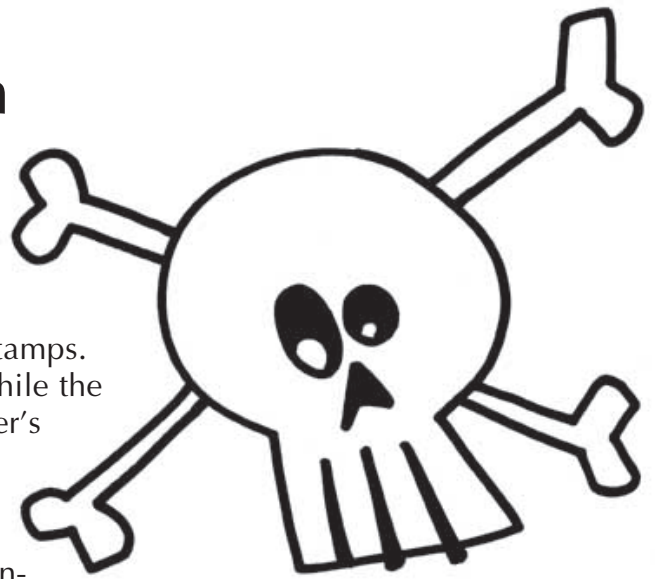
An Accidental Poisoning Can Happen Anywhere

As a health educator I teach people to be aware of unintentional poisonings. Most usually happen in and around the home. However, what about in the post office?

Yesterday, I went to the post office to purchase some stamps. Ahead of me was a woman with a toddler in a stroller. While the woman was completing her transaction, I noticed the toddler's interest was diverted to the diaper bag. Within seconds the curious child had removed baby powder, diaper rash ointment, wet wipes, and a prescription bottle with medication. Luckily, before the baby had a chance to get into any real danger the woman realized what the child was getting into and put the products back into the diaper bag. She then moved the diaper bag out of the reach of the child.

Could this happen to you? What could you do differently?

Keep in mind that when you bring products with you, take the time to secure them out of the reach of children. Remember children act fast and so do poisons.



If you have any questions or comments on these articles or have ideas for topics, contact the Health Educator at the Central New York Poison Center by dialing 1-800-222-1222 or dial direct to 315-464-5375.

VISIT US ON THE WEB

WWW.CNYPPOISON.ORG

You can now visit us on the web. The Central New York Poison Center's web site is a wealth of information. Get the facts on poison tips, education, and more.

We offer educational opportunities with Train-the-trainer programs designed for teachers, healthcare professionals and childcare providers. You can download our ABC's of teaching poison prevention and begin today!

All of our educational materials are in a (pdf) format for easy downloading and reproducing. You can catch up on back issues of our newsletter "Poison Prevention" too!

While you are there take our site survey and let us know how you liked the site. We are always looking for valuable feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Did you know that more than 40 million people in the United States are affected by allergies?

The Medicine Cabinet

Look at the label of all prescriptions and over the counter medicines and check the expiration date. Once a product is opened the exposure to light, air and environmental conditions can reduce its effectiveness. Take time today to properly discard old medications, ointments and other first aid products. Properly discarding unwanted medications reduces the risk of poisoning.



Antihistamines, Decongestants & Cough Medications *Continued from page 1*

or a decongestant, or both. It is easy for someone to be confused about which one to use for relief.

Anti-histamines block histamines. Histamines are naturally produced by our bodies in response to an allergic reaction. They help to relieve a runny nose by drying up the mucus. A common side effect can be drowsiness. Therefore, the best time to take antihistamines is before bedtime.

Decongestants are used to reduce swelling and clear nasal passages, making it easier to breathe. Decongestants probably won't make you or your child drowsy. However, decongestants contain pseudoephedrine, which can produce excitability.

Coughs are often another symptom resulting from allergies and colds. You need to be aware of the difference between a "tickle in your throat",

causing irritability and a persistent chest cough. The type of cough determines the medicine you select to treat it.

A suppressant helps to suppress the cough reflex that is triggered by the irritation usually caused by nasal drip.

An expectorant loosens the thick mucus in the chest, "breaking up the cold". This generally allows you to cough up the phlegm, which is a positive result.

Whether allergies or cold, using too much or the wrong medication can cause harmful effects. Always read the label to understand what it will do for you and how much to take. If you have questions about the product ask your doctor or the pharmacist before taking the medicine.

Teaching children about poison prevention

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What are the ways someone can be poisoned?

Answer: 1. Eating or drinking something. 2. Breathing in smoke or fumes. 3. Spilling or splashing a product on your skin or in your eyes. 4. Coming in contact with something on their skin. 5. A bite or sting.

What things can be poisonous?

Answer: Medications, Cleaning Products, Paints, Automotive Products, Plants, Cosmetics, Pesticides, Insects, Animals and Reptiles.

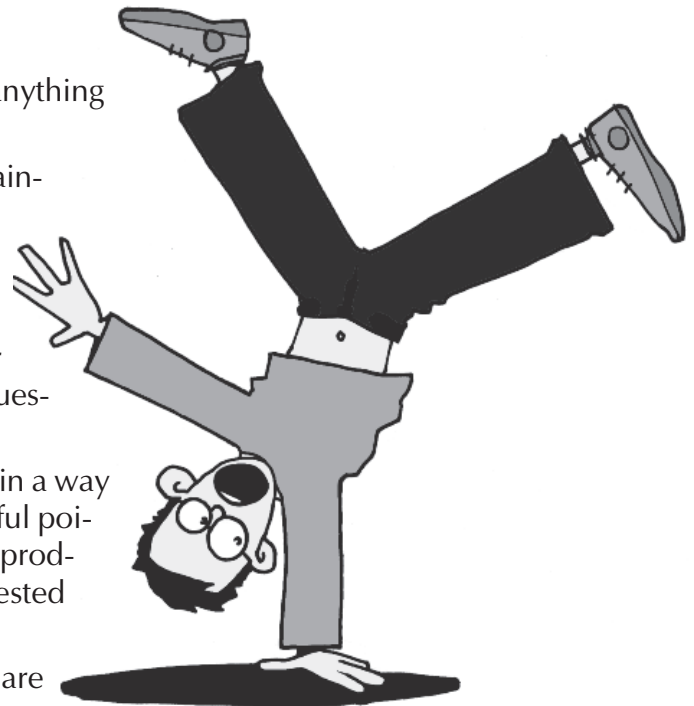
How can you prevent accidental poisonings?

Answer:

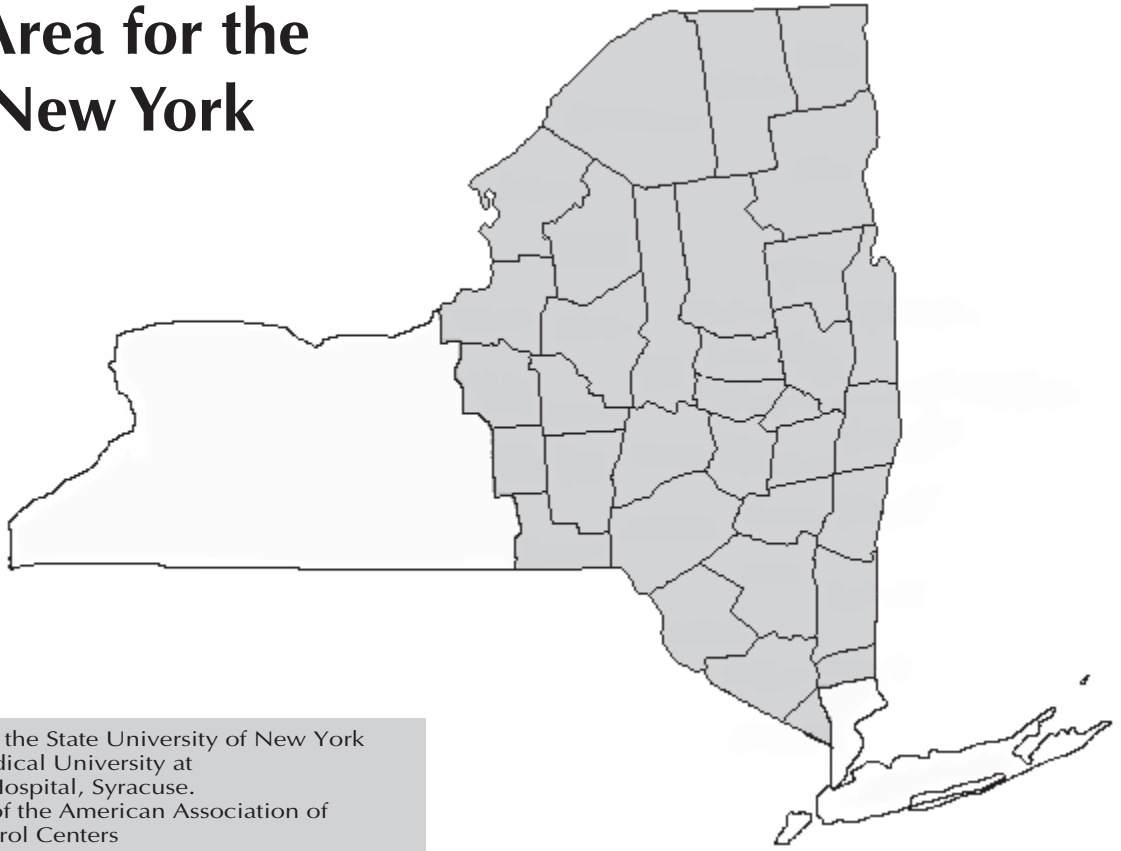
- By always asking a grown-up first before putting anything in their mouth.
- Store all drugs and chemicals in their original containers and out of the reach of children.
- Never put chemicals in food containers.
- Never call medicine candy.
- Keep the number of the poison center on or near the telephone and call if you have a problem or question.

It is important to understand that when a product is used in a way that it was not intended the product could become a harmful poison. For example some things like cosmetics or cleaning products are to be used on the outside of the body but if ingested they could be harmful.

The benefits of teaching kids about poison prevention are numerous. Visit our website. We offer activity sheets that can be downloaded for free at www.cnypoison.org, Click on comprehensive education and "fun for kids".



Calling Area for the Central New York Poison Center



A Service of the State University of New York
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