



# Poison Prevention

Newsletter

June 2012

UPSTATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY • 750 East Adams Street • Syracuse, NY 13210

## The Cinnamon Challenge

Lock on the medicine cabinet? Check! Lock on the liquor cabinet? Check! Lock on the spice cabinet? Yes! There has been resurgence in a thrill-seeking activity among adolescents. Called the “cinnamon challenge” this game dares a challenger to swallow a spoonful of ground or powdered cinnamon without drinking any water for one minute.

Most teens are unaware of the possible dangers. Holding cinnamon in the mouth causes extreme dryness in the mouth and throat. The body can't produce saliva fast enough to swallow all of the cinnamon without the help of additional liquid. People who attempt the challenge are at risk of choking, vomiting, coughing and hypoxia (a dangerously low level of oxygen in the blood caused by the choking or gasping.) “If the cinnamon is accidentally aspirated into the lungs it can cause pneumonia as well”, says Dr. Alvin C. Bronstein, director of Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center. In some extreme cases teenagers have ended up in the hospital.

First recognized in 2000, there are now thousands of internet videos of people attempting the cinnamon challenge. There is also a Facebook page dedicated to it. Although, the site warns people not to attempt the challenge it also promotes videos and testimonials of people who have. Unfortunately, there can be serious consequences.

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## Energy Drinks

### What are energy drinks?

Energy drinks, marketed primarily to ages 12–25 year olds, claim to enhance mental and physical performance. As carbonated beverages, energy drinks are often sold in convenience stores, grocery stores, and even at bars (mixed with alcohol). Most contain large amounts of caffeine and sugar and often contain herbal stimulants. With names like “Red Bull” and “Monster”, their names connote power and speed. Advertisements promote increased performance, reaction speed and concentration as well as an improved sense of overall wellbeing. Manufacturers label these products as “dietary supplements,” which frees them from the obligation to follow federal regulations that apply to sodas and juices and allows them to make such claims.

### Sports drinks vs. energy drinks

Sports drinks consist mostly of water, sugar, vitamins and electrolytes, to replace those lost when exercising. Energy drinks include stimulants, such as caffeine, guarana (more caffeine), ginseng, and taurine. Many of the ingredients listed in energy drinks have not been well researched, especially not in combination with each other.

### Dangers

Researchers have linked energy drinks to an increase in heart rate, blood pressure and irritability as well as sleep disturbances and anxiety. According to Brown University, the caffeine in energy drinks also acts as a diuretic and can cause severe dehydration.

### Energy drinks combined with alcohol

Energy drinks act as a stimulant and alcohol acts as a depressant. Mixing a depressant with a stimulant reduces the depressant effect, increasing the “buzz”. As a result, this lessens some of the effects of alcohol while making the drinker feel more stimulated, less fatigued, and basically “less drunk”. Often this leads to increased consumption, poor judgment and risky behaviors.

### Looking at just the caffeine, how much is too much?

According to the Mayo Clinic, for most healthy adults, moderate doses of caffeine — 200 to 300 milligrams (mg) aren't harmful. But some side effects, like insomnia, anxiety, heart palpitations, or stomach upset may suggest your limiting or even ending your caffeine habit. A clinical report published in the journal of the American Academy



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# Summer Safety

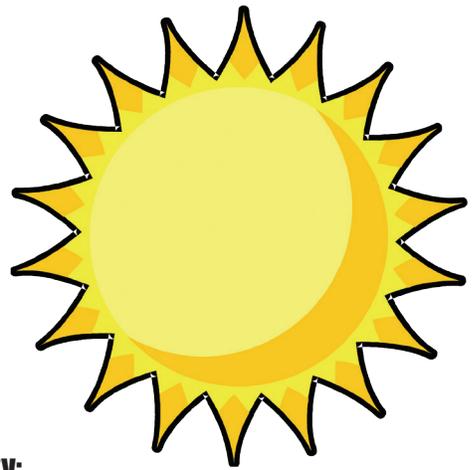
Summer is a favorite time of year— children are out of school, families spend quality time together. However during the summer months, Poison Centers in the US answer more calls than in any other season. Here are some tips on staying safe this summer:

## Food Safety:

- Cold foods (especially those containing mayonnaise, egg, meat, poultry fish/seafood) should be kept refrigerated. Do not let food sit at room temperature for more than 2 hours
- Do Not Cross-Contaminate! Cooked foods should not be placed on containers that previously held raw meat, poultry, fish, or seafood without washing the container first.
- Always wash hands and counters before preparing food. Use clean utensils for cooking and serving.
- When grilling, make sure to cook the meat thoroughly by turning meats over at least once to cook evenly.

## Chemical Safety:

- When using pool/cleaning products, pesticides, fertilizers, lamp oil, kerosene, lighter fluids and/ or automotive fluids, ALWAYS read the directions on the label for proper use.
- Keep all chemicals in original containers, locked and out of reach of children and pets.
- Wear protective clothing, masks, eye protection when applying chemicals. Wash clothes, footwear or any exposed skin that comes in contact with chemicals.
- Do Not mix products –combining products can produce toxic fumes.



## Outdoor Safety:

- Avoid sunburn by limiting time spent in the sun especially when the sun is the strongest (from 10 am to 2 pm). Wear clothing to cover exposed skin and regularly apply sunscreen with at least 15 SPF.
- When using insect repellent, apply 10% to 35% DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) containing insect repellent to exposed skin, clothes, sleeping bags, tents, etc. Avoid applying repellents to broken skin or wounds and use caution when using repellent near eyes, nose and mouth
- While enjoying your yard, know the name of plants and flowers in and around your home and be alert to insects that may bite or sting. Do not pick berries/plants/mushrooms to eat from your backyard or fields.

From barbecues to gardening, from opening pools to yard cleanup, from grilling to bug bites and stings, the Upstate New York Poison Center Experts are here 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year to help in the event of an emergency or with any concerns – 1.800.222.1222. Why not program it into your cell phone – it travels with you!

## Safety 1<sup>st</sup> Cabinet Locks Recalled Due to Lock Failure; Children Can Gain Unintended Access to Dangerous Items

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and Health Canada, in cooperation with Dorel Juvenile Group (DJG) Inc., of Columbus, Ind., today announced a voluntary recall of consumer product – Safety 1<sup>st</sup> cabinet slide locks with model numbers 12013 and 12014. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. It is illegal to resell or attempt to resell a recalled consumer product.

The cabinet locks are being recalled because young children can disengage the lock, posing the risk of injury from dangerous or unsafe items stored in the cabinet. Consumers should immediately remove the recalled locks and contact DJG for a free replacement lock of a different

model. When removing the recalled locks, consumers are urged to immediately store dangerous items out of reach of children.

Consumer Contact: For additional information, please contact DJG toll-free at (877) 416-8105 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, or visit the firm's website at [www.djgusa.com](http://www.djgusa.com). In March 2012, 900,000 Safety 1<sup>st</sup> Push 'N Snap cabinet locks were recalled due to lock failure.

To see this recall on CPSC's web site, including pictures of the recalled products, please go to: <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml12/12180.html>

# Detergent Dangers For Kids!

Poison Centers nationwide are urging the public, especially parents, to keep highly concentrated “single dose packs” of laundry detergent up and out of reach of children. Poison Centers have reported a recent increase in calls about pediatric exposures to these single-dose packets. These highly concentrated, “pre-dose” packs are housed in a colorful, soluble packet, attractive to young children. Exposure can occur through ingestion as well as dermal or ocular exposure to the product.



Parents may not consider these products to be dangerous, and therefore may leave them on top of the washing machine or within reach of their children. Unlike other household laundry detergents, which may only cause minor GI symptoms, these products have caused decreased rate of breathing, decreased heart rate, loss of consciousness, wheezing, aspiration and prolonged vomiting. Exposure has resulted in hospital admission. Children who initially exhibit some gagging, nausea, and vomiting become lethargic within a matter of 10 to 30 minutes from the exposure.

Ophthalmologists have seen corneal abrasions due to ocular exposures to these pod-type laundry detergents. Several brands including Purex, Tide and All have been implicated in these exposures.

Manufacturers are now aware of the related problems. Toxicologists are still studying the precise composition. The adverse effects from these products may be caused by the breakdown of the chemicals, a bodily reaction to the substances, or perhaps a chemical reaction with the acid in the stomach.

“The recent increase in calls regarding highly concentrated laundry detergent is very concerning,” said Dr. Alexander Garrad, toxicologist at the Upstate Poison Center. “No longer are we seeing the mild stomach upset i.e. nausea and vomiting, associated with regular household detergent but rather significant adverse effects that warrant hospitalization and breathing support. Parents absolutely must be aware of this hazard and do everything in their power to keep these products from their children.”

The Upstate New York Poison Center recommends that parents keep detergents and laundry products out of the reach of children. The Poison Center is available 24 hours a day, to take your call at 1-800-222-1222.

## Energy Drinks

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of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that adolescents get no more than 100 mg of caffeine a day and that younger children shouldn't drink caffeinated beverages on a regular basis.

Soft drink	Size*	Caffeine**
Mountain Dew	12 oz. (355 mL)	46-55 mg
Pepsi	12 oz. (355 mL)	32-39 mg
Sprite	12 oz. (355 mL)	0 mg
Type of coffee	Size*	Caffeine**
Generic brewed	8 oz. (240 mL)	95-200 mg
Generic brewed, decaffeinated	8 oz. (240 mL)	2-12 mg
McDonald's brewed	16 oz. (480 mL)	100 mg
Starbucks Pike Place brewed	16 oz. (480 mL)	330 mg
5-Hour Energy	<b>2 oz. (60 mL)</b>	207 mg
Monster	8 oz. (240 mL)	80 mg
Red Bull	8.4 oz. (250 mL)	76-80 mg
Rockstar, regular or sugar-free	8 oz. (240 mL)	79-80 mg

## The Cinnamon Challenge

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In the first three months of 2012, the American Association of Poison Control Centers reported 139 calls to poison centers nation-wide seeking help or information about the intentional misuse of cinnamon – nearly three times the total call volume for all of 2011. Of those calls, 30 required medical evaluation. At least 122 of those calls specifically involved the “cinnamon challenge”.

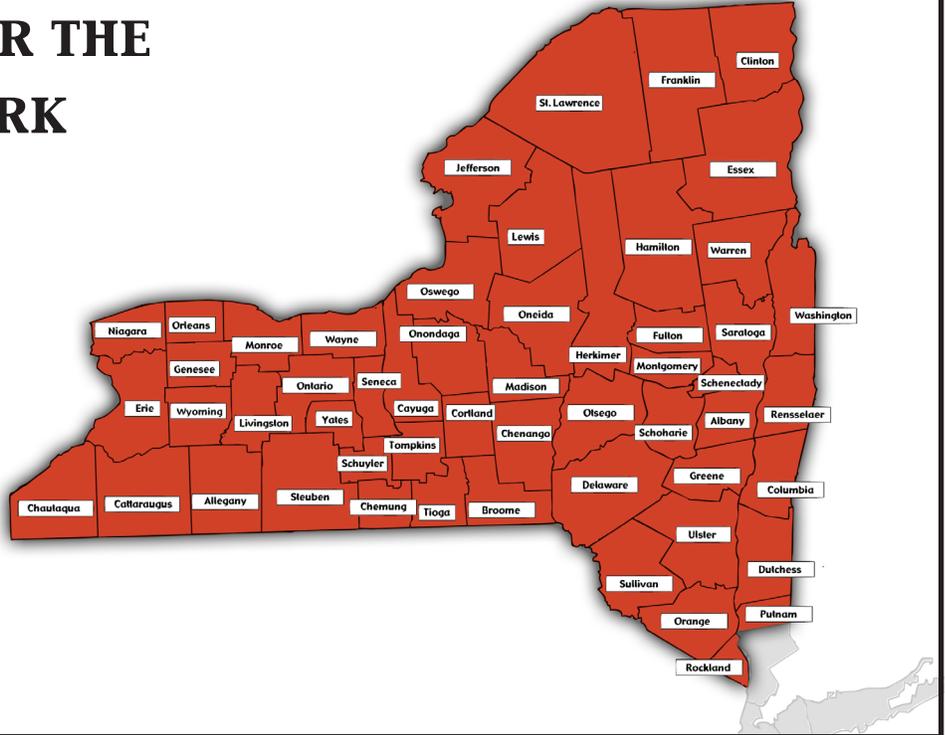
The Upstate New York Poison Center advises parents and caregivers to talk to kids about the possible dangers related to this “game” What might seem like a harmless challenge could end up with a trip to the emergency room.

Sources: <http://www.prweb.com/releases/2012/3/prweb9342421.htm>, American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC),

# SERVICE AREA FOR THE UPSTATE NEW YORK POISON CENTER



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## Unintentional Poisoning Can Happen To You...At Any Age!

To receive your **FREE** telephone stickers, magnets, and information brochures, dial 1-800-222-1222 ask for the Health Educator at The Upstate New York Poison Center.

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