

NEW PARENTS GUIDE TO
Poison Prevention

UPSTATE
NEW YORK
POISON CENTER
1-800-222-1222



Follow us on



Did you know that 62% of our calls involve children under the age 5 and most of those poisonings are preventable?

How to Contact the Poison Center:

In a poison emergency, for poison information, or for educational materials, call us at

1-800-222-1222

or visit us online at www.upstatepoison.org.

**Don't forget to
program this number
into your cell phone!**



The Upstate New York Poison Center (UNYPC) assists the medical community and general public with poison emergencies by providing state of the art management expertise.

Combining compassionate patient care with education, research, and community outreach, the staff of the UNYPC confirms its commitment to excellence through a dedication to wellness.

Our Purpose:

This pamphlet is written by registered nurses that are Certified Specialists in Poison Information at the Upstate NY Poison Center. We are the specialists (RN and pharmacists, all with critical care backgrounds) who answer the phones and your questions. We provide the most efficient and up-to-date poison information available. There is so much information available through the internet, media, "old wives tales", well meaning relatives and outdated practices. We thought that a current practical guide for new parents would be beneficial.

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POISON PREVENTION AND CHILDPROOFING THE HOME

Step 1: Before the baby arrives, establish a safe environment using these safe practices

- Understand that children see things from a different height and perspective.
- The world through the eyes of a child...
 - Bright colored liquids: they see as something good to drink
 - Rat poison and pills: looks like candy.
- Children imitate what they see and they want to put everything in their mouths.
- They want to explore everything in their reach.
- Know how to identify high risk areas of the home.
- Some areas in the home that could harbor poisons include the:
 - Kitchen
 - Bathroom
 - Garage
- Get down on your hands and knees and crawl into the bathroom and kitchen and tug on those cupboard doors.
- Realize that child resistant locks will slow the child down but does not prevent the child from opening the door.
- Yes, definitely use the child resistant locks but it is best to put toxic and caustic chemicals out of harm's way, high in cupboards and out of reach. Cleaning products, toilet bowl cleaners and dish detergents should not be kept under the sink.
- Then walk into the garage and see what items are within the reach of your child.
- The garage poses multiple potential hazards to a small child and some of the products can be life threatening, even in small amounts. Examples include:
 - Windshield washer fluids
 - Antifreeze
 - Wheel cleaner
 - Pesticides



Store products in their original containers. Even a mouthful of antifreeze or windshield washer fluids can cause severe problems and can easily be mistaken for a tasty drink.



AGE RELATED CONCERNS

NEWBORN TO INFANT STAGE (0-6 MONTHS)

Step 2: Once the baby has arrived

- **Breastfeeding:** Many medications taken by the mother can cross into the breast milk. Contact your doctor or lactation resource if you are taking any medications and before starting any new medications.
- Resources for pregnancy and lactation include:
 - Your local Poison Center: 1-800-222-1222
 - Pregnancy and Risk Network: 1-888-724-2454 (A New York State Resource) - www.pregancyrisknetwork.org
- Formula mixing:
 - Follow instructions properly for mixing
 - READ THE LABEL
 - Formula that is too concentrated or too diluted may be harmful to your baby
- Use digital thermometers instead of mercury thermometers



AGE RELATED CONCERNS

BABIES 6 TO 12 MONTHS

Step 3: Your Baby is Becoming Mobile - exploring is his/her game

- Everything goes into their mouths as they explore their new world.
- Many of our calls are from parents of children in this age group.
- Common calls are:
 - Baby care items such as powder, diaper rash cream, baby oil, vitamin A & D ointment, petroleum jelly, shampoo, baby wash and sun block
- Now that they are crawling . . . watch out! Things are in their reach:
 - Coins, disc batteries, magnets, silica gel, paint chips, toys, bullets, BB's
- Babies love to explore mom's purse.
- Babies reach for pill dispensers.
- They will find any dropped medications on the floor.
- Never let a baby use a pill bottle for a rattle.
- Examples of dangerous items that they get into include:
 - Chest rubs, vapo steam, diapers and their contents, room deodorizers, plug-ins, litter boxes and house plants



AGE RELATED CONCERNS

TODDLERS: 1-2 YEAR OLDS

Step 4: The Climbers - As they grow they become great explorers and are able to climb

- The nooks and crannies of the home (inside and out) pose more opportunities for exposures.
- Common exposures for this age group:
 - Toothpaste
 - Mouthwash
 - Vitamins
 - Cleaning products– for kitchen and bath
 - Oven cleaners
 - Laundry detergents and laundry pods
 - Automatic dishwasher detergents
 - Bleach
 - Pesticides: ant traps, rat poison, insect sprays
 - Topical products: ointments, creams and muscle rubs
 - Personal care items: nail polish, nail polish removers, soaps and make-up
 - Flavor extracts
 - Spices
 - Salt
 - Sterno
 - Car care products: antifreeze, wheel cleaner, windshield washer fluid
 - Garage items: weed killers, potting soil, plant fertilizers, rock salt
 - Mushrooms
 - Insects
 - Daily Pill Minders



AGE RELATED CONCERNS

PRESCHOOL: 3-5 YEAR OLDS

Step 5: They are becoming little people, walking, talking, and learning about their world. Their world is expanding and they are guided by impulse and you.

- Common preschool concerns:
 - Craft items: glue sticks, super glue, markers, crayons and paint
 - Glow sticks
 - Mouthwash
 - Hand sanitizers
 - Sunscreen
 - Alcoholic drinks
 - Fish tank supplies
 - Cold packs
 - Berries
 - Eye drops
 - Vitamins
 - Energy Drinks with caffeine
 - Deodorant
 - Toothpaste
 - Fluoride rinse



LOOK-ALIKE PRODUCTS

“Good products” can become “bad products” when you don’t follow label directions and instructions.



- **Sparkling Laxative & Ginger Ale (bottle) Sparkling Laxative (cherry flavor) & Red Soda Pop** These laxatives look and smell very much like soda to a young child. They can cause dehydration and electrolyte imbalances if ingested in large amounts.
- **Cleanser & Grated Cheese** These products and their containers are both very easy to confuse. You can prevent this confusion by never storing food products and cleaning products in the same cupboard.
- **Mouse bait pellets in a box & Candy in the same type of box** These products are not so much look-alikes as sound-alikes. To a young child the brightly colored boxes are both attractive and when shaken they sound identical.
- **Chocolate Laxative & Chocolate Candy** Many medicines look and taste like candy, but they are not candy. Never call medicine candy to encourage a child to take it. All medicines (and vitamins) should be stored out of reach of children.
- **Beer & Soda Pop** There are many beers and alcoholic beverages on the market that resemble sodas and fruit juices. Be aware of these similarities so that you don't store look-alike beer and soda side-by-side in the refrigerator. Even small amounts of alcohol can cause problems in small children.
- **Lamp Oil & Cranberry Juice** This is a good example of two liquids that are almost identical in color and consistency. Lamp oil contains a petroleum distillate which can cause severe respiratory distress when ingested.
- **Mothballs & Mini Marshmallows** Placing a few mothballs on a table next to a few mini marshmallows, you will see how similar they look. Once again, you cannot rely on the strong scent of the mothballs to be a deterrent.
- **Pine Cleaner & Apple Juice** If you hold these two containers side-by-side you'll see that the liquids are almost identical in color and consistency. Drinking a pine cleaner could be deadly.
- **Red Decongestant or Cold Preparation & Red Hot Cake Decorations** If you place a few of each in a sandwich bag and ask a child if it's candy, they will most likely say "yes". These two products are very similar. Many adults cannot tell the difference. It's important to store products in their original containers. Don't carry medicine in your purse or pocket in a plastic bag.
- **Dishwashing Liquid & Lemon Juice** (both with lemons on the label) Many adults, as well as children cannot read. They use pictures as a guide to what is in a container. Be aware of products like these.
- **Windshield Washer Fluid & Blue Punch/Kool Aid** These two products are not only similar in color but are also both sweet tasting. Windshield Washer Fluid is one of the most toxic substances to ingest. As a safeguard, all garage items should be stored on a high shelf (about 4-1/2 - 5 feet off the ground) and never in old food containers.

SAFE MEDICATION DISPENSING

- Do not mix medication in with formula or breast milk bottles.
- Use pharmacy provided measuring spoons, as household spoons are inaccurate.
- Nurses read the label 3 times before dispensing medication to insure accurate dosing. You should do the same.
- Follow these steps:
 1. As you take the medication off the shelf, **READ THE LABEL.**
 2. As you pour it in the measuring spoon, or draw it up in an oral syringe, **READ THE LABEL.**
 3. Prior to giving it to our child, **READ THE LABEL.**



COUGH AND COLD MEDICATIONS ARE NOT RECOMMENDED FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 4.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has made the following statement regarding the use of cough and cold medications:

"Makers of over-the counter cough and cold medicine has responded to the FDA ruling that their products not be given to children under age 4 by removing them from store shelves. Research has shown these products offer little benefit to young children and can have potentially serious side effects. Many cough and cold products for children have more than one ingredient, increasing the chance of accidental overdose if combined with another product. So without these over-the-counter cough and cold medicines, what is the best way to treat your toddlers' cold? Acetaminophen or ibuprofen can reduce aches and pains. A cool mist vaporizer can help loosen congestion. A simple bulb syringe and saline nasal spray can be used to clear stuffy noses. Plenty of liquids, especially chicken soup, and rest also help children feel better. But, don't underestimate the power of TLC. Your caring and comfort is one of the best medicines for your child."

The above script is part of the American Academy of Pediatrics radio series **"A minute for Kids"**, which airs weekdays on WBBM-AM in Chicago, IL.



POISON PREVENTION AND CHILDPROOFING THE HOME

MEDICATIONS

Store Medications in Their Original Containers

Teach Children to “Stop and Ask First”

- Pill minders that are available on the market are often not child resistant.
- Medication bottles are not childproof; they are child resistant and will only slow them down.
- Insure that tops are properly fastened (push and twist).
- Keep all medications in a locked cupboard, not in the medicine cabinet. This includes:
 - Redness relief eye drops
 - Muscle rubs
- Lock medicines up after taking them.
- Is it medicine? Call it medicine. Never call it candy.
- Children learn by imitation. Never take medicines where your children can watch.
- Store any pet medications separately from human medications.
- Pay special attention when visiting grandparents.
 - Pill minders are not child resistant
 - Many pill containers such as those to treat arthritis are not child resistant
 - Encourage grandparents to lock up their medications, salves and ointments

Poisons can look like food or drink. Teach your children to ask an adult before eating or drinking anything!



FIRST AID FOR POISONINGS

Has the person collapsed or stopped breathing?

If yes, then call 911 immediately.

Does the person have poison in their eyes?

If yes, then rinse the eyes with room temperature running water for 15 to 20 minutes and then call the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.

Does the person have poison on their skin?

If yes, remove their clothes that the poison has touched, rinse the skin with room temperature running water for 15 to 20 minutes and then call the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.

Has the person inhaled poison?

If yes, move them into fresh air right away and then call the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.

Has the person swallowed the wrong medication or too much medication?

If yes, call the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.

Has the person swallowed something that is not food or medicine?

If yes, then call the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.



Poison Specialists, RN's, help manage your call.

OUTDATED PRACTICES

Despite our prevention strategies, poison exposures do occur

We ask that you call us for guidance on how to proceed, as there are many outdated practices that can cause harm to your child. The immediate reaction is to get the unwanted substance(s) out of the stomach, but these practices often cause more harm than benefits.

We **NEVER** recommend putting your finger down your child's throat to make them vomit.

We do recommend a finger sweep of the mouth to remove a potential choking hazard.

We do recommend wiping out their mouth with a wet wash cloth in order to remove any visible substance.

We **NEVER** recommend that you make your child vomit with Syrup of Ipecac. While used at one time, this product is no longer considered safe or beneficial.

We **NEVER** recommend that you make your child vomit by giving them dish soap or hydrogen peroxide. These products have the potential to be irritants and harmful if swallowed.

We **NEVER** recommend that you give your child salt water to make them vomit. This can cause a severe and dangerous electrolyte imbalance.



A TO Z REFERENCE GUIDE

Some Common Pediatric Exposures Reported to the Poison Center

The poison center receives volumes of calls for the pediatric population, many of which are listed below. We are here to guide you on either managing the exposure at home or directing you to seek medical treatment. Some of the products listed are considered non-toxic but may pose a choking hazard or aspiration risk to your child.

PLEASE CALL THE POISON CENTER WITH **ANY EXPOSURES FOR ADVICE.**

Those products listed with an * necessitate an immediate call to the Poison Center because they may pose a significant health risk to your child.

A

A and D ointment

***Aftershave**

***Alcoholic drinks**

***Animals bites**

Animal food

Antacids

***Antifreeze**

Ant traps

***Automatic dishwasher detergent**

B

***Baby Powder**

***Baby oil**

Baby wash

***Batteries**

***BB's**

***Berries**

C

***Caterpillars**

Cat litter

Caulk

Chalk

***Coins**

Contact lens solution

Crayons

***Caffeine**

Cigarettes

Cosmetics

D

***D-Con**

Deodorant

***Deodorizers**

***Detergents**

Diaper rash ointment

Diapers

E

***Essential Oils**

***Energy Drinks**

***E-cigarettes**

F

Feces

***Fertilizers**

***Flavor extracts**

***Fluoride products**

G

***Gasoline**

Glow sticks

Gum

Gummy vitamins

H

***Hand sanitizers**

***House plants**

Hydrocortisone cream

I

***Iron tablets**

Ice packs

***Insects**

K

L

***Lamp oil (citronella, tiki torch fuel)**

***Laundry detergent**

***Laundry pods**

Light bulbs (broken)

Lotion



Make-up

Markers

***Medications**

***Mercury thermometers**

***Mouthwash**

***Muscle rub**

***Mushrooms**



Nail polish

***Nail polish remover**

***Nicotine (cigarette, E-cigs, nicotine gum)**



***Orajel gel**



Paint

Paint chips

Pencils

Pens

***Pepper spray**

***Perfume**

***Pesticides**

Petroleum jelly

Play dough

***Plants**

Potting soil



***Rat poisoning**

***Rock salt (ice melt)**

***Rubbing alcohol**

S

***Salt**

Shampoo

Shower gel

Silica gel

***Sterno**

Sun block

***Superglue**

T

Thermometers (broken)

***Tobacco products (cigarettes, e-cigs, chewing tobacco, nicotine vapor products)**

***Toilet bowl cleaners**

Toothpaste

***Toys (choking hazard)**

V

***Vaporub**

***Vaposteam**

***Visine eye drops**

***Vitamins**

W

***Weed killer**

***Windshield wiper fluid**

***Wheel cleaner**

RESOURCES

Poison Center: Tel: 1.800.222.1222

Web: upstatepoison.org

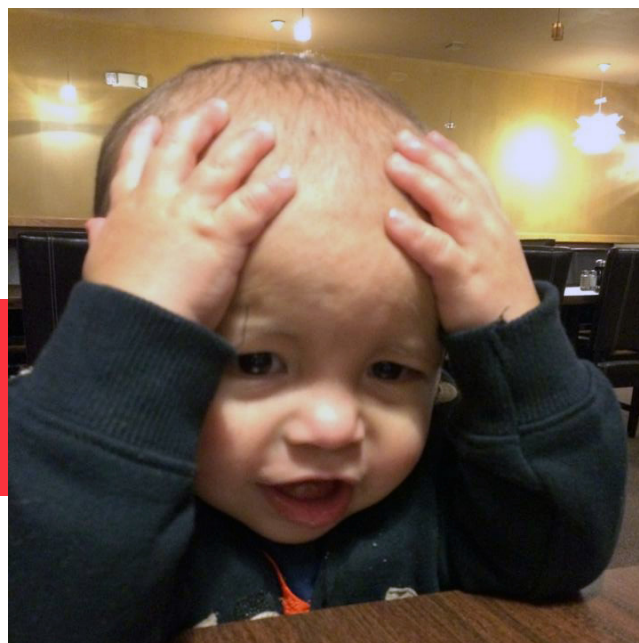
Pregnancy Risk Network..... 1.888.724.2454

Pediatrician: _____

Fire Department: _____



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**This doesn't have to be
you.....**

"I was with my newborn in the other room and I turned my back on my toddler for a second who was in the bathroom. I found him under the sink and he had ingested _____."

"The childproof lock was on the door but my child was able to open it and he drank _____."

"My two year old climbed up on the kitchen counter and I found him with the cough and cold medicine container."

"My child drank a sip of bleach that I had stored in a water bottle."

"I dropped a pill and my child found the pill on the kitchen floor and before I could reach him...."

"My parents were visiting and my baby got a hold of the daily pill minder and my mother is diabetic and has high blood pressure, my baby ingested....."

"My child had the super glue and....."

"My 4 year old had his brother's Epi-Pen and....."

**But, if this does happen...
Remember to stay calm and**

**call the Upstate New York Poison Center at
1-800-222-1222**

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