



# Poison Prevention

## Newsletter

## Spring 2005

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

## March is Poison Prevention Month

During the month we have many exciting activities and events scheduled to celebrate the month long event. With a service population of 4.8 million, collaborative partnerships are key to our success in reducing poisonings through education and outreach.

The education staff at the Central New York Poison Center would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you, our friends, who throughout the years have continued to promote mutual wellness to your patients, students, clients, customers and staff. So whether you have sponsored an event or activity, hosted a health fair, presented a poison prevention session we want to say "THANKS!" We couldn't do it without you!!!

This year we would like to especially thank those businesses and organizations who have graciously agreed to underwrite our Poster Contest and our Billboard Campaign or have contributed somehow to our educational efforts (Be sure to be on the lookout for the 20 billboards in the Syracuse area, promoting the services of the Central New York Poison Center, thanks to our sponsors!).

- Banach & Toomey Insurance
- CNY Society of Health System Pharmacists
- Kinney Drugs
- Onondaga County Medical Society
- Pediatric Society of Onondaga County
- Price Chopper
- Print Solutions Plus
- Rural Metro
- Saturn of Syracuse and Rt. 31
- Upstate Printing
- Wegmans

## Experts On Poison, Only A Phone Call Away

By Lee Livermore

The phones were ringing off of the hook at the Poison Center. To the poison information specialist this is business as usual as a calming voice answers, "Poison Center how can I help you?".

Registered Nurses answering the phones at the Central New York Poison Center are the experts in poison emergencies and poison information. You probably wouldn't be able to identify them at grocery store. Even in speaking with them you might not guess just how critical their job is in the management of a poisoning.

### Imagine:

- Your toddler has pried open a pill container with pills that look like candy. He has eaten some but you're not sure how many
- Preparing laundry you pour some Clorox Bleach into a drinking cup leaving it on the counter. When you turn, you see your 3 year old son drinking it, thinking it is water
- Your doctor increased the strength of your medication and you suddenly realized that you had mistakenly taken twice the dosage indicated

These are just a sample of the types of calls that the Poison Information Specialists respond to everyday of the week, 365 days a year. Each year the Center receives about 50,000 calls from the community including calls from doctor offices, and emergency departments, some with life or death consequences.

No matter the site of the call, every call is treated with professional and expert advice. The specialists who answer the calls to the Poison Center are highly trained, Registered Nurses with experience in clinical settings and are required to become certified as Specialists in Poison Information. Special skills are required in gathering information from a frantic caller while assessing the situation without the benefit of

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**Poison emergency?  
Poison information?  
Call Us!**  
**Visit us on the web:**  
[www.cnypoison.org](http://www.cnypoison.org)

# Pet Poisonings

One of the questions that often comes up during one of my Poison Prevention Programs is "What should I do if my pet is exposed to poison?". The effects of various toxins in animals can be dramatically different from those seen in humans. Certain plants and food products can cause severe illness or even death in animals. The specialists at the CNY Poison Center will do their best to answer any pet question based on the information and time available. It is important to remember every pet and breed is unique and deserves special attention. If we cannot answer your question we will recommend you call your local veterinarian or refer you to call the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center at 1-888-4-ANI-HELP (1-888-426-4435) which is available 24 hours. Their website is [www.napcc.aspc.org](http://www.napcc.aspc.org).



## Resources

The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center has specially trained veterinary toxicologists on-duty around the clock. Resources include an extensive collection of scientific journals and books as well as sophisticated databases unique to their service.

## How Is ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center Different?

The center is dedicated to providing the most up to date veterinary poison and drug information possible. Their staff veterinarians provide a wide range of information specific to animal poisoning, using databases that contain a collection of more than 60,000 individual cases - involving pesticide, drug, plant, metal and other exposures in food-producing and companion animals. The Center has extensive experience in assisting veterinarians in poison management providing immediate and specific treatment recommendations. If an animal needs hands-on veterinary care, the Center will direct an animal owner to their veterinarian and will provide the veterinarian with a detailed diagnostic and treatment protocol.

## What to Do for a Poisoned Person

Call the poison center immediately before/after performing the first aid procedures below:

### INGESTED (SWALLOWED) POISONS

1. Call the Poison Center
2. Do not make the person throw up unless told to do so by the Poison Center
3. Directions will be given to you by the Poison Center

### INHALED (BREATHED) POISONS

1. Call the Poison Center
2. Carry or pull the person to fresh air, being careful not to expose yourself to the toxic fumes
3. Loosen clothing around the neck of the victim
4. Observe breathing for irregular patterns or arrest  
Give artificial respiration if necessary
5. Keep the person still and warm

### OCULAR (IN THE EYE) POISONS

1. You must hold the person's eyelids open and flush with a gentle stream of lukewarm water for 25 minutes
2. Call the Poison Center

### DERMAL (ON THE SKIN) POISONS

1. Call the Poison Center
2. Remove contaminated clothing. Be careful not to expose yourself to the material
3. Flush the contaminated area immediately with large amounts of water

### PARENTAL (BITES & STINGS) POISONS

1. Call the Poison Center
2. If possible determine the identity of the offending insect
3. Place something cold (e.g. ice, cold pack, a cold cloth) on the bite to relieve pain

### FINAL POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Always save the container in which the substance was stored for identification of product and amount involved.
- Answer all of the questions that the poison information specialist asks you when you call.

## POISON FACTS

- More than 2.4 million poisonings were reported nationally to all U.S. Poison Centers last year.
- The Central New York Poison Center received almost 50,000 calls last year.
- About 50% of calls are about children under 5.
- 78% of all the calls to the CNY Poison Center are treated at home through accurate telephone management provided by the Poison Center.
- 13% of all poisonings involve children under the age of 5.
- Cleaning products are the #1 poisoning agent.
- Most poisonings are unintentional and can be avoided.

For more information visit our website at [www.cnypoison.org](http://www.cnypoison.org) if you need educational materials or phone stickers call 1-800-222-1222 and ask for the Health Educator.



## Experts On Poison, Only a Phone Call Away

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observation or examination. Knowing what questions to ask is critical in making the right decisions. Can the exposure be handled at home? Does the patient require hospital treatment in an emergency department? Management decisions are made in concert with our clinical toxicologists.

Based on the survey results we received from people who have called the Poison Center, respondents are relieved to know that there is a place to call for free and expert advice in poisoning emergency or for poison prevention information. By simply dialing **1-800-222-1222** you have access to medical and clinical professionals to help manage the poison event. Be sure you have the number on or near your phone just in case.

# Poison Prevention Poster Contest!

In celebration of March,  
Poison Prevention Month

Sponsored by:



[www.cnypoison.org](http://www.cnypoison.org)

Working in collaboration with the  
Northern New England Poison Center

### Age Categories:

Level 1.....	Ages 4-5
Level 2.....	Ages 6-7
Level 3.....	Ages 8-9
Level 4.....	Ages 10-11

### Poster Details:

- Size: 11x14 only.
- Poster must state a single poison prevention message.
- Poster must list the following information on the back: name; age; address; telephone number
- Poster must be the sole work of the entrant.

### Prizes:

**One Grand Prize: \$100 Kinney Drugs Gift Card\*!**  
3 Prizes for EACH age group:

First Prize: .....	\$50 Kinney Drugs Gift Card*
Second Prize: .....	\$25 Kinney Drugs Gift Card*
Third Prize: .....	\$15 Kinney Drugs Gift Card*

\* Gift Card redeemable at any Kinney Drugs location

### Judging:

All posters will be judged on the basis of creativity, originality, and how well the poster conveys the message listed on this poster.

# CALLING AREA FOR THE CENTRAL NEW YORK POISON CENTER



A Service of the State University of New York  
Upstate Medical University at University  
Hospital, Syracuse.  
A Member of the American Association of  
Poison Control Centers

## 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 Central New York Poison Center.