



**Upstate
New York
Poison
Center**

1-800-222-1222

www.upstatepoison.org

Poison Prevention

Newsletter

March 2011

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



PROGRAM YOUR CELL PHONE CAMPAIGN

During the month of March, we are recommending, you PROGRAM YOUR CELL PHONE with the number of The Upstate New York Poison Center.

- 2.1 million people call U S Poison Centers yearly.
- 50% are about children under 6
- 50% are about all others, including adults
- 82% are accidents, not meant to happen
- Most people don't know the Poison Center number

Program your cell phone now... just in case!

1-800-222-1222

Dear Reader,

The New Year brought the closing of the Western New York Poison Center, The Ruth Lawrence Poison and Drug Information Center in the Finger Lakes region and the Hudson Valley Poison Education Center (HVPEC). The Upstate New York Poison has expanded its coverage area to now include these areas.

While we are saddened to say goodbye to many of our colleagues, we want to assure you that calls to a Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 will NOT be affected by these closings. Calls will still be answered by well-qualified staff, as required by our certification through the American Association of Poison Centers. We have full confidence that we can and will positively impact the health and wellbeing of the populations we serve.

The Upstate New York Poison Center of Upstate Medical University is dedicated to reducing the number, the cost and the severity of poisonings throughout our newly formed 54 county coverage area. We will continue in our mission to offer the same high quality service to which you have been accustomed. We thank you for your past support in promoting poison safety and we encourage you to visit our website for updates at www.upstatepoison.org.

Yours in Poison Safety,

Gail Banach

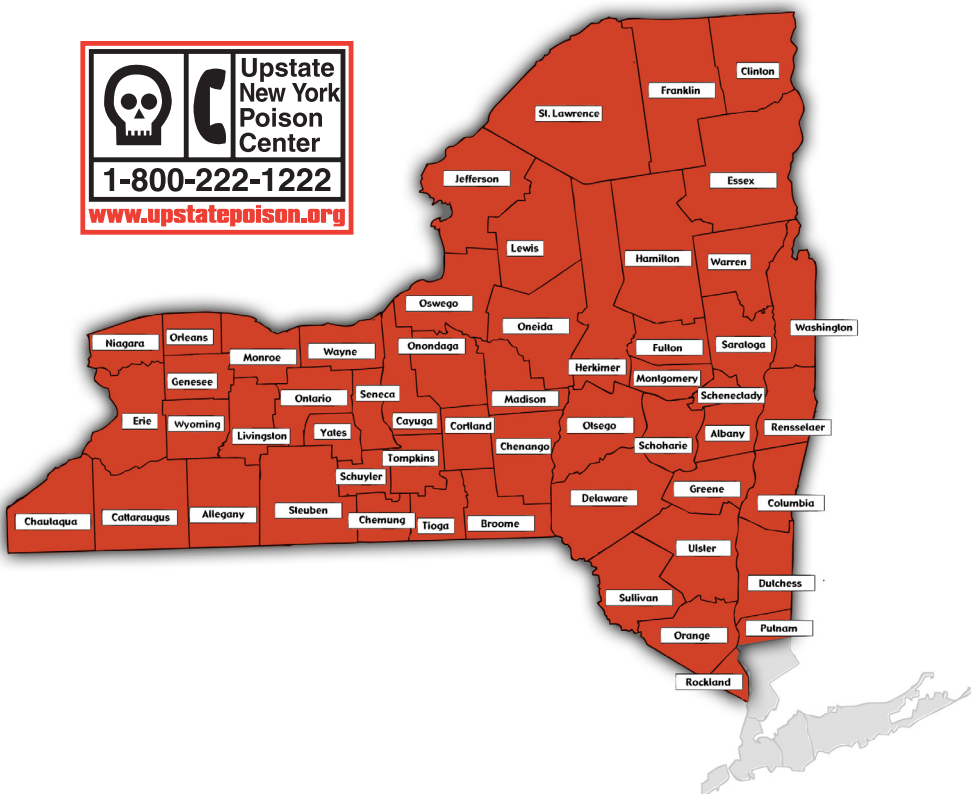
Director of Public Education & Communications



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New Marijuana Soda

A company based in Soquel, Calif., has created a new line of soda pot — or, marijuana soda — that it plans to soon launch in Colorado. The soda is marketed under the name Canna Cola and the soda pot line will include the "flagship cola drink Canna Cola, the Dr Pepper-like Doc Weed, the lemon-lime Sour Diesel, the grape-flavored Grape Ape and the orange-flavored Orange Kush."

The labels promise "12 mind blowing ounces," and each bottle will retail for roughly \$10 to \$15.00 and contain 35 to 65 milligrams of THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the main psychoactive ingredient in cannabis.

The soda will be marketed to Medical Marijuana dispensaries. There are currently 15 states, as well as the District of Columbia, where medical marijuana is legal. However, the conditions of its legality differ from state to state, and marijuana for any purpose is still illegal under federal law.

Read more: <http://healthland.time.com/2011/01/25/bud-in-a-bottle-new-marijuana-soda-to-launch-in-feb/#ixzz1CvRXpoTy>

Sources: <http://www.santacruzsentinel.com/>, <http://www.time.com/time/>, <http://decoder.drugfree.org/2011/02/01/marijuana-soda/>,



FDA Takes New Steps to Reducing Risks from Acetaminophen

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has taken new steps to reduce the risk of severe liver injury associated with acetaminophen, a widely used pain- and fever-reducing drug.

On Jan. 13, 2011, FDA announced it is

- asking all makers of prescription products that contain acetaminophen to limit the amount of the drug to 325 milligrams per tablet or capsule
- requiring a Boxed Warning on all prescription acetaminophen products that highlights the potential risk for severe liver injury. Boxed Warnings are FDA's strongest warnings for prescription drug products, used for calling attention to serious or life-threatening risks

In addition, FDA is requiring a Warning on labels of all prescription products that contain acetaminophen that highlights the potential for allergic reactions. These allergic reactions include swelling of the face, mouth, and throat; difficulty breathing; itching; and rash.

Used effectively in both prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) products, acetaminophen is among the most commonly used drugs in the United States.

You should always read the label when taking prescription and (OTC) medications. The potential for an overdose of acetaminophen exists when directions are not followed and the recommended dosage is exceeded or when medications with acetaminophen are taken in combination.

Sandra Kweder, M.D., deputy director of FDA's Office of New Drugs, says the agency's most recent action is aimed at making pain medications containing acetaminophen safer for patients to use. "Overdoses from prescription products containing acetaminophen account for nearly half of all cases of acetaminophen-related liver failure in the U.S., many of which result in liver transplant or death," says Kweder.

Most of the cases of severe liver injury occurred in patients who

- took more than the prescribed dose of an acetaminophen-containing product in a 24-hour period
- took more than one acetaminophen-containing product at the same time
- drank alcohol while taking the drug

"There is no immediate danger to patients who take these combination pain medications and they should continue to take them as directed by their health care provider," says Kweder. "The risk of liver injury primarily occurs when patients take multiple products containing acetaminophen at one time and exceed the current maximum dose of 4,000 milligrams within a 24-hour period."

For more information visit the FDA website at www.fda.gov/ForConsumers.

Source: <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/UCM239891.pdf>

Value of Poison Centers

Poison centers provide free and confidential health care services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. With the help of highly-trained health care professionals, poison centers field more than 4 million calls ever year, including more than 2.4 million poison exposures. This service is provided with no direct cost to the patient, practitioner or health care institutions.

Poison centers save millions of dollars in unnecessary health care spending. Multiple studies have found that without poison centers, patients exposed to poisons would seek unnecessary treatment in an ED. One study found that 70 percent of patients treated at home with the help of a poison center would've otherwise sought unnecessary medical care at their local hospital. That study estimates that poison centers saved \$33 million in unnecessary health care charges in 2007. To put it another way: For every dollar the state spent on that poison center, it saved about \$36 in unnecessary health care charges. Poison centers are a good deal for taxpayers, for the government, for health care institutions and for insurance companies.

Poison centers track outbreaks of disease and poisoning. Through the National Poison Data System, a

tool used by U.S. poison centers, poison centers are often the first to catch contaminated food outbreaks or other public health crises. Poison centers were enlisted from the beginning of the H1N1 flu pandemic in early 2009, and were used to answer calls about treating the flu, tracking bad reactions to the vaccine and helping alleviate the strain on state and local health departments. Poison centers, through NPDS, are also on the front line of any potential bioterrorism outbreak. Poison centers have helped to track contaminated peanut butter, contaminated spinach and contaminated dog food, among other outbreaks.

Poison centers educate the public and professionals about the dangers of poison. Poison centers employ public educators who create awareness of the services of the Poison Center, inform the public as to how to access their Poison Center and help spread the word about the dangers of poison. This service provides a "piece of mind" factor that is incalculable in its worth. Additionally, poison centers often facilitate training for health care providers including toxicologists and pharmacists.

Source: AAPCC

Bath Salts

A new synthetic drug known as "bath salts" has hit the market. The contents of the small packet of powder, with names like "Cloud Nine" and "White Lightning," was not designed for use in an actual bathtub. It is an odorless power which can be tan, brown or white in color and sells for \$25-\$50. "Bath salts" are powerful synthetic stimulants that can cause severe side effects, including paranoia, hallucinations and violent behavior", said Mark Ryan, director of the Louisiana Poison Center, who has been studying the trend. "The drug has been compared to cocaine and methamphetamine" according to Ryan, "because of its addictive characteristics". The drug is sold in head shops, tattoo parlors, gas stations and truck stops throughout the country and can also be purchased over the internet.



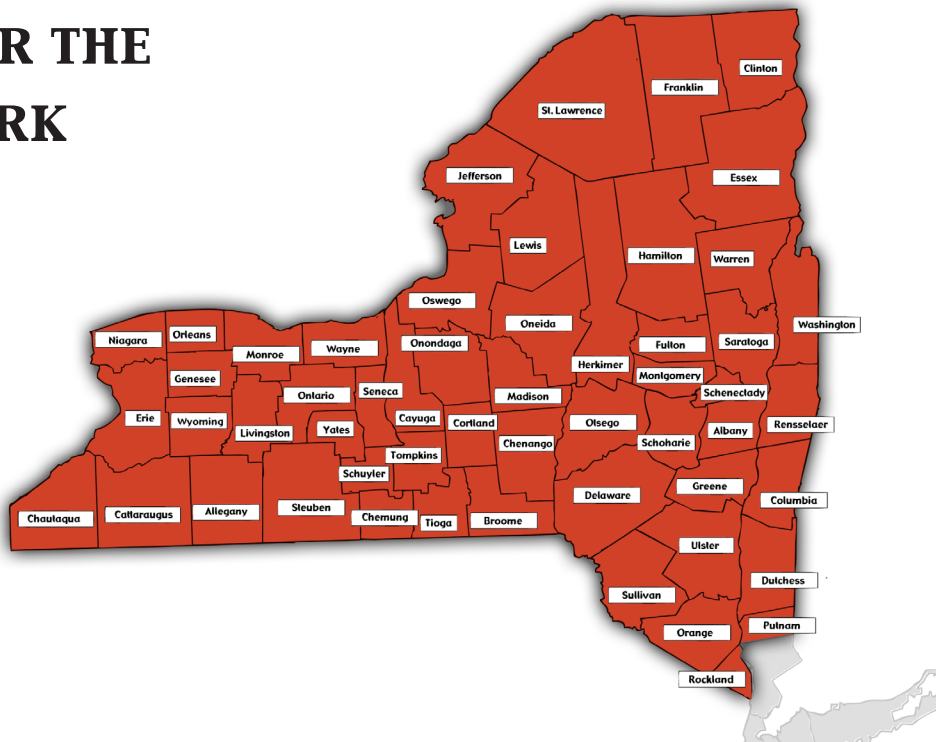
"Packages containing the powdery substance are typically labeled 'not for human consumption' and marketed as bath salts, or plant food or insect repellent. Users mostly snort the drug but it can be injected, smoked or even eaten", Ryan said.

The drug is gaining the attention of many legislators and as a result several states have placed a emergency ban on the product. Sen. Charles Schumer D-N.Y., said last week that he will introduce legislation to ban bath salts nationwide.

SERVICE AREA FOR THE UPSTATE NEW YORK POISON CENTER



UPSTATE
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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.