



Poison Prevention

Newsletter

March 2016

UPSTATE
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

750 East Adams Street • Syracuse, NY 13210

Drug Forums Held in Onondaga County

On January 20th a capacity crowd filled the John Mulroy Civic Center in downtown Syracuse for the Onondaga County Drug Taskforce's first drug forum. The event was orchestrated by the Taskforce to give voice to the heroin and opioid crisis in the county, providing the community an opportunity to listen to subject matter experts and ask questions of panel members.

The following day on January 21st, the West Genesee School District filled its auditorium with community members looking for solutions to this crippling crisis. Dan Cummings from News Channel 9 successfully moderated the event. This size of the crowd at each of the events demonstrated the level of concern prevalent in the CNY community related to heroin and opioid abuse.

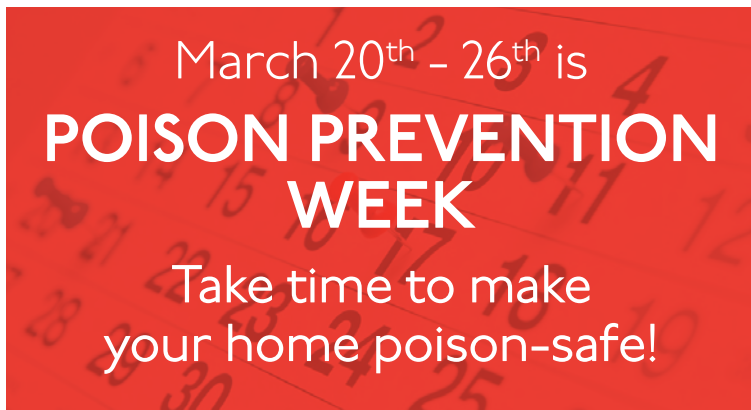
At both forums, representatives from law enforcement, emergency services, addiction and treatment and prevention, including the Upstate New York Poison Center participated as panel members. Congressman John Katko of the 24th congressional district also contributed to both forums.

In addition to local subject matter specialists, each forum provided heartfelt testimonies from both a recovering addict and from a parent whose daughter lost her life to heroin. Each of the testimonials helped drive home the reality of drug abuse.

The Onondaga County Drug Taskforce is planning additional forums through the coming year to give community members in others regions of the county the opportunity to discuss the issues related to heroin and opioid abuse. The dates will be posted at the Upstate New York Poison Center's website at www.upstatepoison.org as soon as they are determined.



Photos: mgreenlar@syracuse.com





Zika Virus

Most people in the contiguous United States are unlikely to ever come into contact with the Zika virus, but two groups need particular attention. First, people living in the Puerto Rico, a U.S. territory, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Caribbean or Pacific territories, and Central and South America are likely to see an increasing spread of Zika and second, pregnant women. The CDC advises pregnant women to postpone travel to areas where Zika is spreading.

The spread of the virus through blood transfusion and sexual contact have been reported in isolated cases. However, for most of the non-pregnant population, there is no reason to think Zika presents a particular risk.

WILL WE SEE ZIKA IN THE US?

The big question many people have is whether Zika will spread widely within the United States. For a disease such as Zika to spread widely, two things are necessary. The first is the specific mosquito species that spreads the virus. The second is the conditions in communities; places that are crowded and don't have air conditioning enable viruses such as Zika to spread. So it is expected, unfortunately, that Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands could have many infections with the Zika virus. But widespread transmission in the contiguous United States appears to be unlikely.

WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT DOING?

The CDC laboratories have developed a test that can confirm Zika in the first week of illness or in a sample from an affected child. CDC is supporting laboratories to provide testing, and working with Puerto Rico and other places at risk to improve mosquito control efforts before warmer weather when mosquitoes become a bigger problem. The CDC also provides support and guidance for health care providers and the public.

Source: CDC Director Blog – Thoughts from CDC Director Tom Frieden, MD, MPH



DID YOU KNOW.....

Not all poisons are bad! A compound in gila monster venom was found to lower blood sugar and is being used in a treatment for Type II diabetes, while scientists are exploring using the venom of the Chilean rose tarantula to treat muscular dystrophy.



New First on Pet Poison List for 2015

Traditionally human prescription medications have led the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center's list of top toxins. Now, for 2015, a new type of toxin has taken over first place. This time, it is over the counter medications that led to the most calls for help with poisoned pets.

The center received over 28,000 call involving over the counter medications in 2015. A wide variety of products were involved - over 7,000 different items. Human prescription medications remained in the top ten, this time sitting at number two.

Why would medications, both over the counter and prescription, rank so high for pet poisonings? First, it is easy for people to drop a pill or capsule when counting out their own medications. A fast thinking, fast moving dog can quickly snag and swallow that dropped medication. Some medications are flavored which makes them even more enticing to a pet. The medications may smell like you, so your dog is attracted to the pill or capsule to begin with. In addition, when your dog grabs your medication, you assume there is a possibility of toxicity so you contact a pet poison center.

Most prescription medications are stored in plastic childproof containers. The catch is that a determined dog or cat can chew and bite into those containers and get at medications. Over the counter medications may be in plastic childproof bottles or in cardboard containers and plastic or paper "packs". It is very easy for a pet to chew into those. Over the counter medications are also often flavored - more so than prescription drugs - making they are even more attractive. Families may not be as careful about storing over the counter medications away from curious pets since they don't think of them as potential toxins.

From the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center, "We've seen numerous new vitamins, herbal supplements and joint

supplements hit the market over the last year, exposing more pets to these types of products, and more of these products to our pets.," said Dr. Tina Wismer, medical director of the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center. "Just as we recommend for prescription medications, it's crucial that pet owners keep these potentially toxic items out of their pets' reach and keep them behind closed doors," Dr. Wismer advises.

ASPCA POISON PET LINE
(888) 426-4435



Unlike Poison Control Centers, there may be a fee for the call

The **Pet Poison Helpline** also encounters many cases of pets poisoned by over the counter medications and supplements. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatories and acetaminophen lead their list of problem drugs.

It is important to store these medications and supplements safely. Use child locks on low cupboards. Keep medications up high and out of the reach of inquisitive dogs. Keep both prescription and over the counter medications in their original packaging so you know exactly what your pet got into and just how many capsules or pills he ate (based on original contents and how much you have used. Keep your medications separate from your dog's so you don't accidentally hand out the wrong drug. Keep your purse safely away from prying canine noses and teeth. Your dog could snag a bottle from your open purse and chew away on it.

With some care and attention to storage, you can keep your pets safe from accidental poisonings. It is well worth the effort to store medications safely and keep a close eye on your pets when you are using any drugs.

Source: www.examiner.com/article/new-toxin-ranks-first-on-pet-poison-list-for-2015

Program your cell phone 1-800-222-1222



You just may save a life!

A Poisoning Can Happen to **You!**

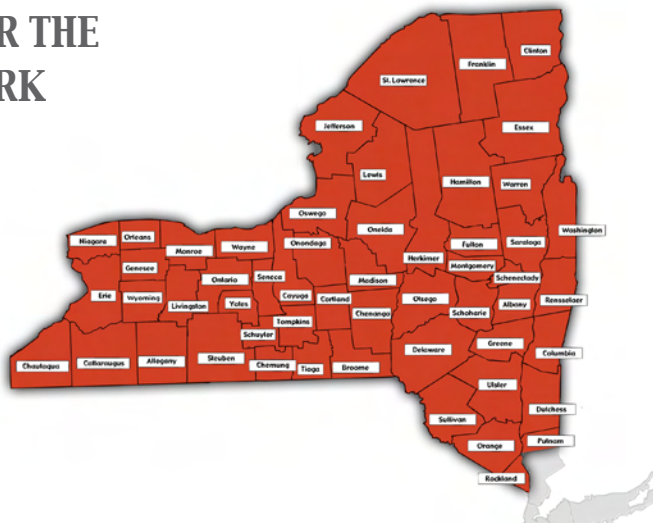


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Happen To You...
At Any Age!**

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