



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
March 18, 2022

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National Poison Prevention Week 2022

March 20th – 26th

The American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC) are uniting with the nation's 55 poison control centers to celebrate National Poison Prevention Week (March 20th – 26th). This annual event, which occurs during the 3rd full week of March, raises awareness about poisonings, the leading cause of injury deaths in the U.S. Many poisonings are preventable and treatable due to expert help of the poison control centers and the Poison Help Hotline (1-800-222-1222).

According to the AAPCC's 2020 Annual Report, U.S. poison control centers provided telephone guidance to over 3.3 million encounters; of that, over 2.1 million were human exposures. Children younger than 5 years of age accounted for over 40% of poison exposures followed by adults and teens.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), unintentional poisoning is the leading cause of injury deaths for all age groups. From May 2020 - April 2021, drug overdoses in the U.S. exceeded 100,000 in which 64% of deaths involved synthetic/prescription opioids. Prescription medications are the most common poison exposures among adults. Today, drug overdose deaths continue to rise in the U.S; as of January 31, 2022, there have been 4,064 opioid substances exposure cases managed by the poison control centers. Among children, cosmetics and personal care products lead the list of common substances of poison exposures. Statistics revealed, poison exposures among children often occurred when individuals, parents, and caregivers become distracted.

In addition to drugs and medication poisonings, human exposures to poisons occur with household and personal products, plants, mushrooms, pesticides, animal bites and stings, carbon monoxide, and many other types of non-pharmaceutical substances when swallowed, inhaled, or touched. Although exposure by ingestion accounted for most of these cases, people were also exposed to potentially dangerous substances through the lungs, skin, eyes, and other routes.

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Although 93% of human exposures reported to poison control centers, occurred in the home, individuals can be exposed anywhere, such as the workplace, schools, outdoors, etc. Any substance can be harmful if used in the wrong way, used by the wrong person, or used in the wrong amount; anyone can experience a poison emergency. Chief Tim Keen, of the Prince William County Fire & Rescue System, urges residents to be vigilant in their daily routines to protect you and your loved ones from hidden threats of poisoning by being mindful even when the slightest changes occur in your daily routine.

To help prevent unintentional poisonings in the home, follow these simple safety tips:

- Use child-resistant containers whenever possible.
- **NEVER** refer to medications as “candy”.
- Read the label on all medicines and products, to follow directions exactly.
- Use measuring devices that come with medications. **DO NOT** Guess - Be Sure of the dose.
- Store all medications, pesticides, and laundry products out of the reach of children.
- Keep all products in their original containers. **DO NOT** store in unmarked bottles.
- **DO NOT** mix household products together; this could make a poisonous gas.
- Install carbon monoxide alarms on every floor of your home, including the basement and outside of each bedroom.
- Place the Poison Help Hotline number throughout your home. **1-800-222-1222**
- Save and store the poison control center number in your mobile phone.
- **Text POISON to 797979** to save the Poison Help Hotline as a contact in your mobile phone.

If you suspect someone has been poisoned, the Prince William County Fire and Rescue System recommends **calling 9-1-1 first prior to calling the Poison Control Center.**

For additional information on poison prevention, visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov, Consumer Product Safety Commission www.cpsc.gov and the American Association of Poison Control Centers www.aapcc.org/prevention/nppw and <https://piper.filecamp.com/uniq/7mZak8kuCluTHbsK.pdf>.

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