

POISON

Is your home safe? Are you aware of the many items in the home that may be poisonous if not used for the intended purpose? A poison is any substance that can harm someone if it is used in the wrong way, by the wrong person or in the wrong amount.

It is important to educate ourselves about poisons. Most poison related incidents are accidental. Accidental poisoning can happen at any age. For children under the age of six, poisonings happen as they explore products around the home. Misuse of products also affects children six to 18 year olds and even adults. Many aren't aware that household cleaning products can be harmful. The elderly many times take the wrong medicine or wrong amount of medicine.

What can families do to prevent poisoning?

- * Store cleaning and laundry products out of the reach of children.
- * Use cabinet locks or safety latches if products are stored in lower cabinets.
- * Always leave products in their original containers. If a solution is mixed for cleaning, label the container.
- * Never refer to medicine as candy or food. Make sure child resistant containers are tightly closer.
- * Be aware of poison look-a-likes. Many candies, beverages and other food products are in packaging resembling common medicines and cleaning products. There are several candies that look like medicines — Sudafed and red hots (candy). Beverage containers and cleaning products looks are similar — blue Gatorade and window cleaner; apple juice and Pine Sol, etc.

Know and teach children the meaning of **DANGER**, **WARNING** and **CAUTION**. The EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) refers to these as SIGNAL words. **Caution:** Harmful if swallowed, inhaled or absorbed through the skin. **Warning:** May be fatal if swallowed, inhaled or absorbed through the skin. Also indicates products can easily catch on fire. **Danger:** Fatal if swallowed, inhaled or absorbed through the skin. Also used on products that could explode if they get hot.

Keep the **Poison Center number 1-800-222-1222** posted in your home and programmed in mobile phones.

The Regional Poison Center provides the following check list for homes. There are items in each room of our homes that can be poisonous if used in the wrong way. Check your home and make sure these items are out of the reach of children and stored properly.

Bathroom

- * Camphor
- * Cleaners and deodorizers
- * Drugs and medicine
- * Hair removers
- * Mouthwash
- * Nail products
- * Shampoo/hair products
- * Rubbing alcohol

Kitchen

- * Antiseptics
- * Dishwasher detergent
- * Disinfectants
- * Drain Cleaners
- * Furniture polish
- * Oven cleaner
- * Plant food
- * Vitamins/iron pills
- * Window cleaner

Bedroom

- * Birth control pills
- * Cologne/perfume
- * Mothballs
- * Pain killers
- * Sleeping medications

Laundry

- * Ammonia
- * Bleach
- * Cleaning Fluids
- * Fabric Softener

Garage/Workplace

- * Antifreeze
- * Gasoline
- * Herbicides
- * Insecticides
- * Kerosene



Everyone should be aware of items or products around the home that could be poisonous. All families have young children visit and they like to explore no matter how closely they are watched. Take time to make your home safe.

Author: Lorene Bartos, Extension Educator

The Learning Child Team



The Learning Child
Child.unl.edu
Follow us on Facebook and
Twitter

