

December 30, 2013

PESTICIDE POISONINGS

The Poison Center at Children's Hospital in Omaha serves Nebraska and parts of seven other states. The Poison Center serves as an information source for individuals and medical professionals. In 2012 there were 43,490 calls to the Poison Center. The primary reason for an exposure was unintentional. The most common site of exposure was the residence. Douglas County was the source of the largest volume of calls on a per 1,000 people basis. The month with the largest call volume is August, followed by October, July, and May. The largest volume of calls, 44.8%, concern medications, cold and cough medications, and analgesics. Children getting into medications and adult reactions to medication were common concern areas. Cleaning products made up 8.3% of the calls. Here has been an increase in calls about pediatric exposure to a new formulation of laundry detergent. These new laundry products contain concentrated liquid detergent in a 'bubble' or 'pod' enclosed by a membrane that dissolves when the packet comes in contact with water. Many of these products are attractive to children because they are brightly colored, soft to touch, and may resemble toys or candy.

Cosmetics and personal care products make up 8.1% of the calls. In this case the largest volume is children using the lipstick and other products and tasting them also. Plants make up 4.5% of the calls. This is usually house plants which the kids sample. Mushrooms also make up a segment of these calls. Mushrooms are common in the yard where children can get to them. Adults try mushrooms without full and complete identification.

Foreign bodies ingested make up 4.2% of the calls. Money is a very common foreign body which kids eat. The other category is larger at 26.2%, because there are lots of things which are not easily placed in a category. Pesticides make up 3.9% of these calls. More than 90% of these 1,151 calls concerned household pesticide products. Both exposure and ingestion were concern areas with household chemicals. The number of calls from ag producers has declined almost every year. This is in part to safety improvements in pesticide product design reducing exposure during mixing operations. Pesticide safety training is also part of the reduction. Many farmers depend on custom applicators for a good share of their application work, thereby reducing exposures. Persons concerned with any poison incident to youth or adults can contact the Poison Center by phone, 1- 800 – 222 - 1222, or on the web at <http://www.nebraskapoisson.com/>. It is there 24/7 to serve your needs.

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