Poison Prevention Guidelines

By:

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Poisoning is one of the major causes of accidental death during childhood, adolescents and adulthood in the United States. Although the actual incidence of poisoning is unknown, the American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC) estimates that more than 4 million poisonings occur every year in the United States.

Poisoning is a significant cause of mortality and morbidity all over the world. Approximately 80% of accidental ingestion occurs in children under 5 years of age and with proper protection, the tragedy of accidental poisoning could be avoided. Furthermore, child abuse should be suspected with the majority of poisoned victims, and during adolescent age groups there is high incidence of alcohol and drug abuse as were suicidal and homicidal attempts.

The majority of adult poisonings are work related due to toxic exposures as were drug abuse and suicidal attempts.

Children under 5 years of age frequently ingest non-toxic materials like soap, detergents, vitamins, plants (some of which might be poisonous) as well as petroleum distillates, detergents and pesticides.

In 1958, the Department of Health designated Children's Hospital of Michigan Poison Control Center as the core unit for the Metropolitan area which can be reached 24 hours a day by making a telephone call. While prevention is best, it is true that poisoning can happen in any home. Our aims are to advise the general public regarding safety precautions that can be observed at home and at work in order to prevent the accident.

How to make your home poison proof:
Here is a checklist of poisonous products found at home that could be reached by toddlers or younger children:

**Kitchen Area:**

A. Powder and liquid detergents.

B. Aspirin, Tylenol or other medications.

C. Furniture polish.

D. Ammonia, oven cleaner or rust removers.

E. Carpet and upholstery cleaners.

**Bedroom Area:**

A. Sleeping pills.

B. Jewelry cleaners, cosmetics and perfumes.
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Laundry Room:

A. Laundry detergents.

Closets, Attic and Storage places:

A. Rat and ant poison.

B. Moth balls and spray.

Bathroom:

A. Aspirin, Tylenol and sleeping medications.

B. Vitamins with iron.

C. Shampoo, lotions, nail polish remover, rubbing alcohol, etc.

Garage, Basement or Workshop:
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A. Windshield wiper fluids, Lye, Kerosene, bug killer, paints, weed killers, fertilizers, antifreeze, etc.

B. Flaking paint, repainted toys, broken plaster, etc.

Purse:

A. Headache medications, Birth control pills, etc.

First Aid for Poisoning:

1. Eye Contact - Remove contact lenses, rinse immediately with water and flush the eye for 10-15 minutes with water. Get medical help before putting the contact lens back.

2. Poison Gases - Minimize the exposure, open the windows and doors and get fresh air. Call for help.

3. Skin Contact - Remove the contaminated clothing, flush skin thoroughly with water.

Call for help promptly for swallowed poisons:
If the victim is unconscious transport to medical facility immediately, call 911, always take the containers of pills with you as well as the vomiting materials, etc.

If the victim is conscious do not induce vomiting if there is any chance of Lye or corrosive ingestion's or if the victim is semi-conscious and having labored breathing.

If the victim is conscious and able to talk, after contacting the Poison Control Center, vomiting can be induced by giving the following:

1-10 years of age - 1 tablespoon Ipecac Syrup followed by a glass of water.

10 years of age and older - 2 tablespoons (1 oz.) of Ipecac Syrup followed by a glass of water.

Poison Prevention Tips:

1. Don't take medicine in front of children and don't call pills "candy".

2. Clean your cabinets frequently and get rid of old medications that are not being used.

3. Lock up all medicines and keep them in child resistant packaging.
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4. Don’t store medicines, cleaning agents or pesticides near food.

5. Keep all products in their original containers.

6. Rinse out the containers before throwing them in garbage.

7. Avoid bringing unnecessary toxic substances in your home.

Household plants are also common sources of poisoning by children. Know the name of all plants in your home and yard. Some of the toxic plants are Apricot Kernel, Avocado leaf, Azalea, Castor bean, wild cherries, English Ivy, Fox glove, Poison Ivy, Philodendron and the Christmas plant, Poinsettia.

Remember that any plant in a child’s mouth is a foreign object that may obstruct the airway or cause severe allergic reaction.

The best treatment for a poisoning is to prevent it from happening. Keep the telephone number of the Poison Control Center near the phone and DO NOT hesitate to call for assistance or information.

Phone Numbers:
The Poison Control Center in Metropolitan Detroit:

(313) 745-5711

When you contact the Poison Control Center, please have all information ready:

Age and weight of person.

Name and amount of the product ingested.

Symptoms.

Time of incidence.

Your address and telephone number.

If I have learned one thing in my life, it is to look out the window at the garden which is full of flowers for encouragement and inspirations. There are seasons to our lives just as to the year. However, the flowers in the garden occasionally are accompanied by weeds. I am going to work very hard to get rid of the weeds so the garden looks pretty with the flowers. My hard work and motivations will help me pull through all seasons in my life.