

Poison Prevention Tips

American Academy of Pediatrics

Each year, approximately 3 million people – many under age 5 – swallow or have contact with a poisonous substance. The American Academy of Pediatrics offers tips in both English and Spanish to prevent and to treat exposures to poison. Please feel free to excerpt these tips or use them in their entirety for any print, online or broadcast story, with acknowledgement of source. The AAP also has tips on [poison treatments](#).

If your child is unconscious, not breathing, or having convulsions or seizures due to poison contact or ingestion, call 911 or your local emergency number immediately. If your child has come in contact with poison and has mild or no symptoms, call **Poison help at 1-800-222-1222**.

To prevent poisoning in your home:

Most poisonings occur when parents or caregivers are home but not paying attention. The most dangerous potential poisons are medicines, cleaning products, liquid nicotine, antifreeze, windshield wiper fluid, pesticides, furniture polish, gasoline, kerosene and lamp oil. Be especially vigilant when there is a change in routine. Holidays, visits to and from grandparents' homes, and other special events may bring greater risk of poisoning if the usual safeguards are defeated or not in place.

- Store medicine, cleaning and laundry products (including detergent packets), paints/varnishes and pesticides in their original packaging in locked cabinets or containers, out of sight and reach of children.
- Safety latches that automatically lock when you close a cabinet door can help keep children away from dangerous products, but there is always a chance the device will malfunction or the child will defeat it. The safest place to store poisonous products is somewhere a child can't reach or see.
- Purchase and keep all medicines in containers with safety caps and keep out of reach of children. [Discard unused medication](#). Note that safety caps are designed to be child resistant but are not fully child proof.
- Never refer to medicine as "candy" or another appealing name.
- Check the label each time you give a child medicine to ensure proper dosage. For liquid medicines, use the dosing device that came with the medicine. Never use a kitchen spoon.

- If you use an e-cigarette, keep the liquid nicotine refills locked up out of children's reach and only buy refills that use child resistant packaging. Ingestion or skin exposure with just a small amount of the liquid can be fatal to a child.
- Never place poisonous products in food or drink containers.
- Keep natural-gas-powered appliances, furnaces, and coal, wood or kerosene stoves in safe working order.
- Maintain working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Secure remote controls, key fobs, greeting cards, and musical children's books. These and other devices may contain small button-cell batteries that can cause injury if ingested.
- [Know the names of all plants in your home and yard](#). If you have young children or pets, consider removing those that are poisonous.

These tips may be excerpted or printed in their entirety, with attribution to the American Academy of Pediatrics.