

For Immediate Release
January 22, 2009

Contact:
Autumn Allen
1-800-222-1222

WAPC Names Top 10 Poisonings in 2008

The Washington Poison Center (WAPC) recorded more than 76,000 cases of humans and animals exposed to toxic substances in 2008. Adults accounted for nearly 31% of the human exposure cases. The most common calls – accounting for over half of those placed to the center's 24-hour hotline – were about prescription and over-the-counter substances.

According to the State Department of Health, poisonings and drug overdoses are the leading causes of unintentional injury-related deaths in Washington State, surpassing motor vehicle crashes.

“Deaths from unintentional drug overdoses are a quickly growing problem – and are now the number one cause of accidental deaths in at least seven states, including Washington,” said Dr. William Hurley, Medical Director of the Washington Poison Center. “These deaths are often from people controlling pain with opioid drugs, such as methadone or oxycodone. Most victims have taken opioids, alcohol and other drugs before death.”

The WAPC’s top 10 human poisonings list for 2008 includes:

1. Ibuprofen
2. Benzodiazepine (tranquilizers)
3. Diaper care/rash product
4. Ethanol (alcoholic beverage)
5. Pediatric Acetaminophen (children’s Tylenol)
6. Non-Drowsy Antihistamines (like Zyrtec and Claritin)
7. SSRI (antidepressants)
8. Desiccant (silica gel)
9. Adult Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
10. Antibiotics Systemic (used for acne)

If you are concerned that a poisoning may have occurred, immediately call your Poison Center's 24/7 hotline at **1-800-222-1222**. Calling within Washington State will connect you to one of the Washington Poison Center's specially-trained pharmacists, nurses and poison specialists. Poison help is always free and confidential. Services are available for people with hearing problems and for non-English speakers.

The WAPC is hoping to continue to provide the important services of poison prevention and treatment advice. However, the proposed Washington State budget has your Poison Center funding slashed in half, which would result in a dramatic cut in services. Contact your local legislator to let him/her know how important your Poison Center is to your community.

www.wapc.org

XXX