

**For Immediate Release**  
February 11, 2009

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## **WAPC Names Top 10 Poisonings in 2009**

The Washington Poison Center (WAPC) recorded more than 70,000 cases of humans and animals exposed to toxic substances in 2009. Adults accounted for nearly 36% 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 remain the leading causes of unintentional injury-related deaths in Washington State, surpassing motor vehicle crashes.

“The Poison Center continues to be an important safety net especially as the number of uninsured in Washington State is projected to reach over one million” said Jim Williams, Executive Director of the Washington Poison Center. “Our specially trained medical staff are able to keep nearly 92% of callers home, meaning they are not having to go to emergency rooms or urgent care.”

The WAPC’s top 10 human poisonings list for 2009 includes:

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

“Medication errors are very common and also very preventable,” said Williams. The WAPC recommends taking a few moments before giving or taking a medication to be sure it is the correct medication, given in the correct dose to the correct person at the correct time. If there is ever a doubt, do not wait for symptoms – call the Poison Center right away.

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 (with the exception of \$30 fee for animal calls). Services are available for people with hearing problems and for non-English speakers.

[www.wapc.org](http://www.wapc.org)

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