

What is a poison?

Any product or substance can be harmful if it is used in the wrong way, by the wrong person, or in the wrong amount. Any person or animal can be poisoned if they:

- Eat it
- Inject it
- Drink it
- Get it on the skin
- Breathe it
- Get it in the eyes



Why should I learn about poisons?

Each year, two million poisoning exposures are reported to Poison Centers across the country. Approximately 90% of these take place in the home.

Who gets poisoned?

- More than 50% of reported poisonings involve children six and younger. Poisoning is the fifth leading cause of "accidental" death in children under the age of six and is one of the most common reasons children are seen in emergency rooms. However, poisonings can happen at any age.
- Few people realize that adults can be poisoned too. Over 30% of calls to the Poison Center are about adults. Adult poisonings result in more serious injuries than any other age group.
- Animals (pets) can also be poisoned. Like children, dogs and cats are curious. They have the natural instinct to lick and chew. Over 6% of the calls to the Poison Center are about animals, including ducks, rabbits, horses, tarantulas, and even fish. Pets and humans are poisoned by the same substances, with a few exceptions.

How do I know if it is a poisoning?

If you see any of the following signs or symptoms, call 1-800-222-1222 right away:

- An open container nearby
- Pills, berries, etc. in the mouth
- Strange odor on the breath
- Burns around the mouth
- Upset stomach, nausea, or vomiting
- Dizziness or unexplained sleepiness

What do I do if a poisoning happens?

- **Stay Calm. Act Fast.**
- Call the Washington Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 right away (if you need an interpreter, it may take a few moments to get one on the line).

Expert Poison Information 24/7: 1-800-222-1222