



**For Immediate Release**

March 14, 2008

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**Utah Poison Control Center Reminds Everyone  
National Poison Prevention Week Is March 16-22**

*'Children Act Fast ... So Do Poisons!'*

Salt Lake City—As National Poison Prevention Week approaches, March 16-22, the Utah Poison Control Center (UPCC) wants to remind people of all ages about the dangers of accidental poisonings. The theme for the week is “Children Act Fast ... So Do Poisons!”

In 2007, more than 61 percent of calls to the Utah Poison Control Center involved children less than 6 years old. The most common substances accidentally ingested by children in this age group were:

- Cosmetics and personal-care products
- Household cleaning substances
- Analgesics
- Topical preparations and creams
- Cough and cold preparations

Although children less than 6 years old are at highest risk for poison exposure, adults age 20-59 comprised 23 percent of calls to the UPCC in 2007, while adults 60 and older comprised 4 percent of calls.

More than 90 percent of poisonings occur in the home. One call to the UPCC provides quick, reliable treatment advice for a poison exposure 24 hours a day, often saving a costly trip to the doctor's office or emergency room. The center's specially trained pharmacists and nurses also can identify situations that may require emergency medical attention, according to Barbara Insley Crouch, Pharm.D., M.P.H., director of UPCC.

“Poisonings can occur at any age,” Crouch says. “But young children and older adults are most vulnerable to accidental poisonings.”

The UPCC urges adults to remember these basic poison prevention tips:

- Call the Utah Poison Control Center immediately if you suspect a poisoning.
- Use child-resistant caps in prescription and non-prescription medications. This allows a few extra minutes to intervene before a child can open a bottle. The same medicines that allow older adults to live active and healthy lives can be deadly to young children.

- Never leave household chemical products and medicines unattended. The majority of poisonings occur when these products are in use.
- Store household products and medicines separately and out of reach and sight of small children and pets. Unintentional poisonings occur when medicines and chemicals are mistaken for food products, such as juice or sports drinks.
- Never store potential poisons in containers used for eating and drinking. Store all products in the original, labeled container.
- Always read the label and follow the instructions before using medicines, cleaners, pesticides, automotive products, and lawn and garden supplies. Be aware that first aid instructions listed on products are often incorrect or dangerous.
- Always leave the light on when giving or taking medicine. Check the dosage each time it is used.
- Avoid taking medicine in front of children.
- Never refer to medicine as candy.
- Clean medicine cabinets periodically and safely dispose of unneeded and outdated medication.
- Check and secure each room of your house for potential poisons.

Contacting the UPCC is free and confidential through the national toll-free hotline—1 800-222-1222. Dialing this number from anywhere in Utah will put you in immediate contact with the Utah Poison Control Center 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The UPCC is accessible to the deaf and non-English-speaking people.

The mission of the UPCC is to prevent and minimize adverse health effects from poison exposure through education, service, and research. Additional information about the Utah Poison Control Center services also can be found at the UPCC Web site: [www.utahpoisoncontrol.org](http://www.utahpoisoncontrol.org).

As an added resource, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the Department of Health and Human Services, has launched the HRSA Poison Help Campaign. The campaign features a new website, [Poison.Help.hrsa.gov](http://Poison.Help.hrsa.gov), with downloadable resources to inform and educate the public on poison prevention and the national toll-free number (1-800-222-1222). The Campaign also serves as a resource for health professionals and injury prevention organizations.

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