



The University of Utah
Utah Poison Control Center

For Immediate Release

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**Utah Poison Control Announces the Observance
Of National Poison Prevention Week March 15-21**

Salt Lake City—Nearly 50 years ago, National Poison Prevention Week was established as an opportunity to highlight the dangers of poisonings in an attempt to decrease the occurrence. The Utah Poison Control Center wants to remind people that poisonings can happen at any age and can be prevented. In Utah, more people die each year from unintentional poisonings than from motor vehicle crashes. Education is a key component in preventing poisonings, and National Poison Prevention Week is a great opportunity to bring this public health problem to light and take steps to decrease the number of poisonings in Utah.

The Utah Poison Control Center (UPCC) received more than 56,000 calls in 2008. Of these calls, more than 60 percent involved children less than 6 years of age. While children are at highest risk for poisonings, people of all ages are at risk. The most common substances associated with poison exposures in children younger than 6 are:

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

Approximately 90 percent of all poisonings occur in the home; therefore, safeguarding the home environment is critical. The UPCC urges people to help prevent poisonings by making sure that each room in the home has been checked for potential poisoning hazards and steps are taken to make the home environment safer. The following tips can help safeguard you and those around you:

Kitchen:

- Store cleaners, medicine, and vitamins/herbals in their original containers, on a high shelf, out of sight, and away from food products. Use child resistant closures on these products. Note: While cleaning, if the phone or doorbell rings, take the product with you.
- Put safety latches on all drawers and cabinets where harmful products are stored.

Bedroom:

- Remove all medicines from dressers and side tables.
- Check that all perfume, cosmetics, and powders are out of reach.
- Make sure all jewelry is stored where children cannot reach.

Bathroom:

- Potentially harmful products should be stored on a high shelf with safety latches or locks on them.
- Be aware of these products: mouthwash, hair products, talcum powder, cleaners, cosmetics, drain clearing products, aftershave, fluoride rinses, and nail products.

Laundry:

- Keep all products in original containers.
- Store bleach, stain removers, detergents, and fabric softener out of reach and in a locked cabinet.

Garage/Basement/Storage Area:

- Keep all products in original containers
- Secure insect spray, weed killer and other gardening products, turpentine, car care products, and other potentially harmful substances in locked storage.
- To dispose of chemicals, contact your local household hazardous waste for information on proper procedures.

Call the Poison Control Center immediately at 1-800-222-1222 if a poisoning occurs. Waiting to see if symptoms will arise can be very dangerous. The Poison Control Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week year-round. All calls to the UPCC are free and confidential.

The mission of the UPCC is to prevent and minimize adverse health effects from poison exposure through education, service, and research. Barbara Insley Crouch, Pharm.D., MPH, director of the UPCC states that, “the UPCC has a highly talented and dedicated staff available around the clock to respond to any poisoning emergency. As a program of the College of Pharmacy, University of Utah, the UPCC staff is familiar with the critical toxicology issues in the state of Utah and can interface quickly with all health-care facilities statewide to provide the best possible care to any poison victim.”

Additional information about the Utah Poison Control Center services also can be found at the UPCC Web site: www.utahpoisoncontrol.org.

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