



Utah Poison Control Center

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Contact: Marty Malheiro
(801) 587-0603
marty.malheiro@hsc.utah.edu

Utah Poison Control Center Celebrates National Poison Prevention Week

SALT LAKE CITY – The Utah Poison Control Center (UPCC) will join poison centers around the country in celebrating National Poison Prevention Week (NPPW) March 17 through 23, 2013. The theme of this year's NPPW is "Poisonings Span a Lifetime."

Since 1962, the President of the United States has proclaimed the third week of March as National Poison Prevention Week to raise awareness about the dangers of poisoning and to prevent poisonings from occurring. Governor Gary R. Herbert signed a proclamation declaring this week as Poison Prevention Week in Utah.

"The UPCC and America's other 56 poison centers are committed to safeguarding the health and well-being of every American through poison prevention and free, confidential, expert medical services," said Barbara Insley Crouch, PharmD, MSPH, Executive Director. "Our poison center responds to calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week in order to help those who have been exposed to toxic substances."

Every 8 seconds, someone needs a poison center. Poison centers in the U.S. receive more than 10,000 calls each day. The UPCC received over 46,000 calls in 2012. Seventy-six percent of those calls were treated at home with telephone follow-up; avoiding unnecessary trips to the emergency department and saving healthcare costs.

"Poisoning can occur at anytime and to anyone," Crouch said. "The UPCC works 24/7 to help those who have been exposed to a poison or to answer the public's questions about a potential poisoning. We also reach out to our communities with information about how poisonings occur and ways to prevent them. Prevention is the best possible medicine."

Despite the great strides that have been made over the years, more work needs to be done to reduce the burden from poisonings. The past few years poisoning has surpassed motor vehicle crashes as the number one cause of unintentional injury deaths in Utah and the nation. Poison centers play a vital role in the nation's public health system and in combating this unfortunate national trend.

The top three poison categories in children involve:

- Cosmetics and personal care products
- Household cleaning products
- Pain killers such as acetaminophen and ibuprofen

The top three poison categories in adults involve:

- Pain killers including narcotics and over-the-counter pain relievers
- Sedatives (drugs to reduce anxiety) and hypnotics (sleep aids)
- Antidepressants

If the unthinkable happens, it's good to know help is just a phone call away. Program your cell phone with the Poison Help number and post it near your home phone. 1-800-222-1222.

Events like NPPW emphasize the most common poisoning risks for adults and children, and offer educational resources for parents to protect their children and adults to make informed decisions regarding use of medications. For more information on NPPW or poison prevention in general, visit www.utahpoisoncontrol.org, or call the UPCC at 1-800-222-1222.

About the Utah Poison Control Center

The Utah Poison Control Center was established in 1954. It was one of the first poison centers in the United States. The UPCC is a program of the University of Utah, College of Pharmacy; staffed around-the-clock with pharmacists and nurses with additional training in clinical toxicology.

About the American Association of Poison Control Centers:

The American Association of Poison Control Centers is a non-profit, national organization founded in 1958 that represents the poison control centers of the United States and the interests of poison prevention and treatment of poisoning.

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