



POISON ANTIDOTE



UTAH POISON CONTROL CENTER

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Mixed Message Mayhem

One of the most dangerous poisoning hazards facing young children is poisonous products that look similar to food or drinks. Young children cannot read labels and may not understand the difference between things that are safe and things that can be harmful. The Utah Poison Control Center receives over 57,000 calls each year for a variety of poison exposures. Approximately 60 % of the calls involve children less than 6 years of age.

Children are curious by nature and are oral explorers. Teaching them what is safe to put in the mouth is a challenge for parents. Unfortunately this task is even more difficult because of a new trend in candy manufacturing. Some companies are making snacks for kids that look like products such as toys, makeup, perfume, bubbles, and crayons. Parents should be cautioned about the confusing message that this sends to children. When they are allowed to drink candy "perfume" for example, and then are later faced with a real bottle of perfume, what will the child do? After being allowed to eat candy "crayons" what might the child do the next time she is coloring with real crayons? While it is not illegal for companies to produce these types of products, it is a dangerous practice that sends a mixed message to children and puts them at greater risk for poisonings.



Consumer Reports

What can adults do to help keep children safe?

- Do not give children snacks that look like non-food products
- Never call medicine "candy"
- Lock-up chemicals, medicines, cosmetics, and personal care products in a high cabinet
- Never leave poisonous products that you are using unattended—not even for a second. Take the product with you if your attention is required elsewhere
- If you suspect a poisoning call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222

Don't Flush!

When it comes time to getting rid of your prescription and over-the-counter drugs, how do you dispose of them? In the past we were advised to flush them down the toilet or the sink. We now know that this practice can be dangerous.



Not Down the Toilet or Sink

Drugs that are flushed down the toilet cannot be removed by the sewage treatment process. This can lead to contamination of surface and ground water. Significant amounts of some drugs with unknown effects in humans have been found in our water. Research has shown that exposure to drugs found in waterways has a serious, negative effect on fish and other aquatic life.

Poisoning and Drug Abuse Risk

Simply tossing unwanted drugs into the trash can also pose a problem. Children or animals may access these drugs which could lead to a serious poisoning. Unused medication can easily be retrieved from the trash by those seeking to abuse the drug or sell it illegally.

Disposal Guidelines

1. Check to see if your local police department has a drug collection program.
2. Check to see if your city has a household hazardous waste program that allows for collection of medications.
3. If there is no collection option: Remove all labels from prescription bottles, mix unused pills with water, vinegar, or wet coffee grounds and liquid medicines with flour. Place the mixture in a sealable plastic bag and put it out in the trash on garbage pick-up day.
4. Don't keep medicines that have expired.

While proper disposal of medicine may be inconvenient, it is important to safeguard ourselves, our loved ones and the environment now and for future generations.

