



POISON ANTIDOTE

Utah Poison Control Center
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Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs

Compact florescent lamps (CFLs) are being used by consumers more and more because of the energy efficiency they provide. These light bulbs contain mercury. Mercury is a toxin that can cause adverse health affects in humans. Mercury in CFLs is only released if the bulb is broken. It is safe if the bulb remains intact. It is important to properly dispose of CFL's and safely cleanup if a breakage occurs. Check your local health department for disposal sites to take unbroken bulbs. To avoid breakage be careful when removing new bulbs from the packaging, installing it, or replacing it. If a bulb does break there are very specific steps to follow in order to protect against mercury poisoning.

The Do's and Don'ts of Mercury Clean-up:

- DON'T** vacuum up the debris. This spreads the mercury and contaminates the vacuum.
- DON'T** use a broom to sweep up the debris. It breaks the mercury into smaller pieces and spreads them.
- DON'T** put mercury down the drain. This contaminates the sewer.
- DON'T** put items that have come into direct contact with mercury into the washing machine. It can contaminate the machine and the sewer. Discard the clothing.
- DON'T** walk around if your shoes are contaminated with mercury. Clothing can also spread the toxin.

DO open the windows and leave the room where the debris is for at least 15 minutes

DO shut-off the central air system if you have one

DO call the Utah Poison Control Center (UPCC) for help 1-800-222-1222

DO clean up the mercury as instructed by the UPCC or the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) www.epa.gov Clean-up steps are different based on the type of surface the spill is on.

Note: These same procedures apply to other types of florescent lights as well as thermometers containing mercury.



www.lightbulbs.us

Resource: EPA

Cough & Cold Medications and Children

Early in 2008 the FDA released recommendations regarding the use of over-the-counter (OTC) cough and cold medicines. The recommendation states that these products should not be used in children under 2 years of age. Later in the year another statement was released by the FDA supporting the Consumer Health Products



Associations' (CHPA) voluntary decision to modify the "do not use" age to under 4 years old. The FDA has also expressed concern in using OTC medicines for the common cold in children between the ages of 2 and 6. Medicine labels will reflect either non-use in children under the age of 2 or non-use in children under the age of 4. This may be confusing to parents and caregivers. To avoid a potential problem, the Utah Poison Control Center (UPCC) advises the following:

- ❖ Follow the instructions on the label
- ❖ If your child is between the ages of 2 and 6, consider consulting with your physician before giving them OTC cough and cold medicines.
- ❖ Do not use two medicines at the same time that contain the same or similar ingredients.
- ❖ Never give medicine to a child that is intended for adult use.
- ❖ Use an accurate devise to measure medicine dose.
- ❖ Keep all medicines locked up and out of the reach of children.

Resources: FDA, CHPA

National Poison Prevention Week March 15-21, 2009

One of the best defenses against a poison exposure is education. National Poison Prevention Week is designed to bring awareness to the danger of poisonings and offer prevention tips and strategies to help reduce poisonings. We encourage you to get involved in spreading the poison prevention message. Visit our website at www.utahpoisoncontrol.org to learn more and access prevention materials and lesson plans. Call the Utah Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 to request free educational materials to distribute. Help spread the poison prevention message as we celebrate this important week!