

Poison Antidote



Allergy Season Help Can Turn Harmful

Non-prescription decongestants for the eye and nose can be helpful during allergy season; however, if used in the wrong way, in the wrong amount, or by the wrong person, they can be harmful. Products that contain ingredients like tetrahydrozoline, oxymetazoline or naphazoline provide relief when applied topically but can cause serious harm if swallowed. Because you can buy these products without a prescription, you may not realize they can lead to a poisoning. Even as little as ½ to 1 ½ teaspoons of the liquid can cause serious harm to a child. Potential toxic effects include headache, nausea or vomiting, blurred vision, slowed heart rate, blue lips, difficulty breathing, seizures, and coma.

Keep bottles up and out of reach of children at all times--even if you plan to use it later. Topical decongestants for the eyes and nose do not come in child-resistant packaging so children can accidentally ingest the drug if the bottles are within reach. If a child swallows one of these products, call the poison control center right away at 1-800-222-1222.

Resources: MedlinePlus, FDA



Pesticide Poison Prevention

In the spring, pesticides including herbicides to control weeds, insecticides to control insects, and fungicides to control mold are often used to help the yard look nice. These substances can be harmful if swallowed or inhaled or if they get onto the skin or in the eyes. The Utah Poison Control Center (UPCC) receives calls about pesticide exposures frequently during the spring and summer months.

Handle Pesticides with Care

Follow these safety tips to prevent mishaps and reduce your poisoning risk:

- Dress with care. Wear appropriate clothing (long sleeves, long pants) and shoes (no sandals) as well as gloves and eye protection.
- Read and follow the directions for use. Using more product than recommended isn't better.
- Use the right product for the job. Use only for those pests that are indicated on the label, and never use outdoor products indoors.
- Close all windows and doors to the home before use if using outdoors.
- Keep children and pets indoors while applying the pesticide.
- Keep children and pets away from the area where the pesticide was applied until that area is dry.
- Do not spray outdoors when the wind is blowing or when it is raining.
- Do not track chemicals indoors. Clean off shoes before entering the home, and wash clothes separately.
- Dispose of pesticides correctly. Do not pour down the sink, in the toilet, or down a sewer or street drain. Contact your local health department for disposal sites.

Store Pesticides Safely

Pesticides can cause harm even when not in use. Follow these steps to prevent a poison exposure:

- Keep chemicals in the original container. Never store in food or drink containers.
- Purchase only the amount of product that you need.
- Store up and out of reach of children and if possible in a locked cupboard.
- Place out of reach of children if interrupted during use.

Poison Exposure Help

If a poison exposure does occur, stay calm. Do not follow first aid directions on the label because they may be wrong. Instead, immediately call the poison control center at 1-800-222-1222 for expert help, and follow these first aid steps:

- If you get a pesticide on your skin, remove contaminated clothing and rinse the skin for 15 minutes.
- If in the eyes, rinse eyes continuously with lukewarm water for 15 minutes.
- If swallowed, do not force the person to vomit.

Resources: CDC, FDA

Utah Poison
Control Center
Spring/Summer 2018

