

Poison Antidote



Medicine Cabinet Cleanout

Leftover pills can be a poison danger. Every year in the U.S., approximately 60,000 emergency department visits and 450,000 calls to poison centers are made after children under age 6 find and ingest medication without caregiver oversight. Seventy-four percent of Utahns addicted to opioids initially got them from a friend or family member. Properly disposing of opioids and other medications can prevent them from falling into the wrong hands.

How do you dispose of your unused or expired pills properly? While it may seem safe to flush them down the toilet, throwing medication in the trash or flushing them down the toilet can negatively affect the groundwater. Throwing pills in the trash also leaves them accessible to children and others who might take and use them.

The safest method for getting rid of unused or expired pills is to take them to a drop-box location. Across Utah, over 100 drop-box locations can be found in most police stations and certain pharmacies. Go to useonlyasdirected.org to find a convenient location.

If you are not able to take your medication to a drop-box location, mix unused drugs with an undesirable substance such as coffee grounds or kitty litter. Place the mixture in a sealed container and put it in the trash can on the day of garbage pick-up.

Cleaning out your medicine cabinet can help keep you and your family safe. Call the poison control center at 1-800-222-1222 with any questions or concerns.

Resources: useonlyasdirected.org, FDA



Winter Poison Hazards

A number of hazards lurk during the periods of cold weather, especially winter. Carbon monoxide poisoning is highest during the winter months. Products such as antifreeze, windshield washer fluid, and ice melt are in frequent use and can pose dangers to people of all ages and pets. Learn more about the dangers of these winter hazards and ways to prevent possible poison exposures.

Carbon monoxide

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas. When carbon monoxide (CO) is inhaled, it makes it harder for your body to use oxygen to keep you alive. It is produced whenever fuel such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood, or charcoal is burned without enough oxygen to produce carbon dioxide. Here are a few tips to prevent CO poisoning:

- Never leave a vehicle running in an enclosed area such as a garage.
- Have fuel burning equipment inspected annually.
- Install CO detectors in all sleeping areas.
- Do not use generators, grills, or gas-powered tools indoors.
- If you suspect CO poisoning, get to fresh air immediately and call 1-800-222-1222.

Antifreeze and windshield washer fluid

Poison exposures from antifreeze and windshield washer fluid rise during the winter. Many of these products are brightly colored and can resemble beverages. Do these things to avoid poisonings:

- Keep products in their original containers.
- Make sure all caps are tightly closed.
- Put products away after each use and store them out of reach of children.

Ice melt

Though useful to keep sidewalks and outside surfaces safe during winter months, ice melt products can pose risks if swallowed. They contain high amounts of salts that can be very harmful. Children who eat even a small amount of ice melting crystals may complain of an upset stomach. Exposure on the skin or in the eyes can cause irritation and dryness.

- Follow the instructions for use on the label.
- Wash skin and rinse eyes if exposed.
- Keep ice melt products out of reach of children and pets.

Utah Poison Control Center is available 24/7 to answer questions and help if a poison exposure occurs by calling 1-800-222-1222. Resources: webpoisoncontrol.org, CDC

National Poison Prevention Week: March 17-23, 2019

Although poisonings are preventable, they are still the number one cause of unintentional injury death in the United States. The yearly National Poison Prevention Week helps bring awareness to the dangers of poisoning and provides opportunities to share prevention tips and strategies to reduce poisonings. Join us in March to promote poison awareness! Visit our website www.utahpoisoncontrol.org to order free prevention materials, download lesson plans to use in the community, and sign up to receive newsletters. You can also follow the Utah Poison Control Center @utahpoison on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest for poison prevention resources throughout the year!

