



NATIONAL POISON PREVENTION WEEK OVERVIEW

To encourage Americans to learn more about the dangers of accidental poisonings and to take appropriate preventative measures, the Congress, by joint resolution approved September 26, 1961, as amended (75 Stat. 681) has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the third week of March each year as "[National Poison Prevention Week](#)" (NPPW). NPPW is the third full week in March each year. [Here is a link to the 2015 proclamation](#). As soon as the 2016 proclamation is available, we will be sure to notify you.

NPPW COUNCIL

The National Poison Prevention Week Council coordinates NPPW events and promotes poison prevention, year-round. The Council provides information about the events associated with National Poison Prevention Week, the steps that you can take to help prevent accidental poisonings, and tips for promoting community involvement in poison prevention. The Council's website is www.poisonprevention.org.

NPPW Overarching & Daily Themes

The two **overarching themes** of National Poison Prevention Week 2016 are:

- *Children Act Fast, So Do Poisons*
- *Poisonings Span a Lifetime*

Additionally, these **daily themes** will be promoted in 2016:

The following offers ideas and language you can use as part of your daily outreach.

Monday, March 21 – Children Act Fast; So Do Poisons

Not only are children naturally curious, but they also act fast. It takes only seconds for a child to get a hold of something dangerous. In 2014, just under half of the 2.9 million exposure cases managed by poison centers involved children younger than six. Of those cases, cosmetics/personal care products, household cleaning substances, and analgesics (pain relievers) were the top three substance categories involved. It's imperative that parents and caregivers take extra precautions to protect children from being exposed to potentially poisonous substances. The best way to be prepared for poison emergencies is by programming the Poison Help number into your phone, 1-800-222-1222, and posting it somewhere visible in your home.

Tuesday, March 22 – Poison Centers: Saving You Time and Money

Responding to approximately 3 million calls each year, poison centers save countless American lives and millions of American taxpayer dollars every year by providing free, confidential medical advice to people who have been exposed to poison. Every dollar invested in the poison center system saves \$13.39 in health care costs and lost productivity, totaling more than \$1.8 billion every year. Poison centers are a good deal for taxpayers, for the government, for health care facilities, for insurance companies, and for the public. Click [here](#) to help support your local poison center today!

Wednesday, March 23 – Poisonings Span a Lifetime

Poisonings & medicine mishaps can happen to anyone, anywhere, and at any time. While half of the exposure cases managed by poison centers in 2014 involved children, many of the more serious cases occurred among adolescents and adults. From children to seniors and Millennials to Baby Boomers, poison prevention is for everyone. By taking a few precautions, you can help keep you and your loved ones of any age poison-free!

Thursday, March 24 – Home Safe Home

While poisonings can happen at work, school, outdoors, and anywhere else, 91% of human exposures occur at home. From the garage to the bathroom to the attic, hundreds of toxic chemicals and substances are stored in our homes. Even some of the more common household items can be poisonous to children, such as laundry products, plants, and personal care products. Follow a few simple steps to ensure that your home is poison safe:

- Save the Poison Help number, 1-800-222-1222, in your phone, and post it in your home for babysitters and visitors.
- Put all of the medicine in your home up, away, and out of sight. [Safely dispose of expired or unneeded medications.](#)
- Install and regularly check carbon monoxide detectors in your home.
- Be aware of where the button batteries are in your home (remote controls, key fobs, watches, etc.) and keep these objects secure or away from children!
- Make sure all cleaning products are stored in their original containers. Store these containers up high and out of reach of children.

Friday, March 25 – Medicine Safety:

In 2014, 57% of human exposures involved medications, or pharmaceuticals. Most over-the-counter and prescription medicines can be helpful when taken as directed. However, when not taken properly, medicines can be harmful, and in some cases deadly. Medication errors can occur at any age, which is why it's important for everyone to be aware of proper medicine safety.

- **Children** – As we know, young children are curious and act fast. Therefore, it's vital to use and store medicine around children properly:
 - Always store medicines up, away, and out of sight of children.
 - Read each medicine's label and always give "as directed" (use the dosing device that comes with the medicine) or as instructed by a physician or pharmacist.
- **Adolescents** – Youth begin to self-medicate around 11 years old, which is why it is important that parents, teachers, and guardians discuss the safe use and storage of medicines with tweens: (*OTC Medicine Safety Program developed by Scholastic, McNeil, and AAPCC is a great resource: <http://www.scholastic.com/otcmedsafety/>*)
 - Learn to read, understand, and follow the *Drug Facts* label.
 - Never share your medicine with someone else or use someone else's medicine.
 - Measure every dose carefully, and always use the dosing device that comes with the medicine.
 - Be sure to get permission and guidance from a parent or trusted adult before taking medicines.
 - Parents and caregivers can find out how to start the conversation about over-the-counter medicine safety [here!](#)
- **Adults** – Between taking care of their children and parents, many adults forget about the importance of their own medicine safety. However, a few simple steps can help prevent poisonings and overdoses:
 - Be prepared for any poison emergency by programming the Poison Help line into your phone, 1-800-222-1222, and placing it somewhere visible in your home.
 - Properly getting rid of medicine that you don't need is especially important if you have children or pets in your home. Click [here](#) to find out how to properly dispose of unwanted or unused medicine.
 - Keep medicines in their original containers and properly labeled. If you have any questions about a medicine or ingredient, call your local poison center.



- **Older Adults** - About one-third of adults 57 years and older use at least 5 different prescription medicines, and most older adults taking prescription medicines are also using over-the-counter medicines, dietary supplements, or both. Due to the increase in medicines, older adults are twice as likely as others to come to emergency departments for adverse drug events and nearly seven times more likely to be hospitalized after an emergency. As more and more patients receive care from more than one provider and even more than one pharmacy to meet their pharmaceutical needs, the patient remains the common denominator. Here's how older adults can protect themselves from accidental poisonings and overdoses:
 - Discuss ALL medications with your doctors and/or pharmacists, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, and vitamins and supplements.
 - Read and follow the directions for each of your medicines, and take them exactly as directed.
 - Keep a list of ALL medications that you are taking, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, and vitamins and supplements, and bring the list whenever you go to doctor or drug store
 - Keep your medicines in child-resistant containers and up, away, and out of sight of children.
 - If you need glasses, always use them when taking medications. Never take medications in the dark.
 - If you experience adverse effects from a medicine or have any questions or concerns about a medicine, call your local poison center immediately at 1-800-222-1222.