

Poison Prevention...Keeping Families Safe

Target Age:

Adults 18 years and older

Goal:

To increase awareness of potential poisoning risks and teach ways to prevent a poisoning from occurring in people of all ages, but especially in children.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the lesson, participants will be able to:

- list at least one potential poison in each of the five listed rooms/areas of the home.
- relate two reasons why children under the age of six are at an increased risk for poisoning.
- identify two poison prevention strategies.
- explain the difference between “child-resistant” and “child-proof” as it relates to poisonings.
- relate two questions the poison control specialist may ask you when you call.

Timeline:

This lesson is designed to be a 60 minute presentation.

Materials:

- Power Point slides. Slides are available on the Utah Poison Control Center (UPCC) website: www.utahpoisoncontrol.org (optional)
- Copy of Poison Name Game* grid for each participant. Activity works best for smaller groups (10-15 people) or teams
- Pen or Pencil for each participant
- Small prize or treat for the winner of the game (optional)
- Look-alike products or look-alike flyer*
- Video *Making the Right Call*. Run time 10 minutes. Available in English and Spanish on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=357ZL_u7fP0
- Household Guide to Poison Control* handout for each participant
- UPCC telephone stickers and/or magnets available by calling 1-800-222-1222 or by ordering on the UPCC website www.utahpoisoncontrol.org . Other education materials are also on the UPCC website
- Infographics: *Why You Should NOT Induce Vomiting**, *Top Poisonings in Children**, *Carbon Monoxide: The Silent Killer** (optional)
- Seasonal Poison Hazards infographics: *Halloween**, *Thanksgiving**, *Holiday* and Winter Poison Hazards** (optional)

***Item is located in the appendix**

- Poison prevention blog posts. Blog posts with current topics are available on the UPCC website: www.utahpoisoncontrol.org. (optional)

Description:

Poisonings can occur at any age. However, young children are at greater risk. UPCC statistics show that children under the age of six account for approximately 60% of poison exposures. It is important to recognize hazards that may poison or injure children and adults, understand prevention techniques, have knowledge of initial first aid, and learn how the poison center can help.

Poison Prevention...Keeping Families Safe Lesson

1. Introduction

- Introduce yourself**
- Explain purpose:** To learn about different types of poisons, how children and adults can get poisoned, how to prevent poisonings, and how to get help if a poisoning occurs.

2. Icebreaker/Game

Poison Name Game: Distribute the Poison Name Game* house grid to each participant. Explain that they will be given five minutes to write as many potentially poisonous products as possible in each of the appropriate room grids. When the time limit is completed each participant one-by-one, reads the items on their paper. If more than one person has an item listed then all participants must cross it out. Participants continue reading their lists and others indicating if they have the same item listed. Once everyone has read through their lists, participants count the number of products left on their paper. The person with the most items left on their list wins. A small prize could be given to the winner (optional). An answer key* is provided for the instructor as a guide to potentially poisonous items.

3. Utah Poison Control Center (UPCC)

Present the following information to the class: You may use the PowerPoint slides if desired. To access them visit the UPCC website: www.utahpoisoncontrol.org

- Mission Statement:** To prevent and minimize adverse effects from a poison exposure through education, service, and research.
- UPCC Help:** Staff consists of registered nurses, registered pharmacists, medical doctors and health educators. The UPCC provides service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Help is free, expert, and confidential. The UPCC helps people of all ages, in all types of poisoning situations.
- UPCC History:** The UPCC was established in 1954. It is located within the University of Utah, College of Pharmacy and is a statewide program that offers free and confidential services to all people in Utah.

***Item is located in the appendix**

4. Definitions and Statistics

Present the following information to the class:

- a. **What is a Poison:** Anything someone eats, breathes, gets in the eyes or on the skin, which can cause sickness or death if it gets into or on the body. Poisons come in different forms; solid, liquid or gas/spray.
- b. **Utah's Poison Problem:** Each year approximately
 - 40,000 calls come into the Utah Poison Control Center
 - 90% occur in the home
 - 80% are managed over the telephone and do not require a visit to a health care facility
- c. **Typical Age Distribution of Human Poison Exposures in Utah:** Each year approximately
 - 60% involve children less than 6 years of age
 - 6% involve children ages 6-12
 - 6% involve children ages 13-19 years
 - 21% involve people age 20-59 years of age
 - 5% involve individuals over the age of 60

5. Common Substances

Briefly present the following information to the class. They will be discussed in detail later in the lesson:

- a. **Typically the most common poisonings in children under six years of age** (listed from most common to least):
 - Cosmetics and personal care products
 - Household cleaners
 - Analgesics (pain medicine)
 - Vitamins and minerals
 - Foreign bodies
 - Topicals
 - Dietary supplements/herbals
- b. **Typically the most common poisonings in people of all ages** (listed from greatest to least):
 - Analgesics (pain medicine)
 - Household cleaners
 - Cosmetics and personal care products
 - Vitamins and minerals
 - Sedatives and antipsychotics
 - Antidepressants
 - Foreign bodies

6. When Do Poisonings Occur?

- a. **When Product is in Use:** Explain the scenario of a mother who normally keeps cleaning chemicals locked up high in a cupboard, but must get them out to do the cleaning. While she is cleaning, the doorbell rings and the cleaning products are left unattended. That is when the child is at a high risk for a poisoning.
- b. **Peak Age:** Explain to the class that the peak age for poisoning is 18 months old.

7. Why Are Children More Likely to Be Poisoned?

a. **Stages of Development:** Discuss the following stages as they relate to poisonings:

- **Infants (0-6 months):** Children in this age group are usually not very mobile. Most poisonings occur as a result of adult error such as administering the wrong dose, or the wrong medicine.
- **Crawlers (6 months-1½ years):** Children this age are usually mobile and begin exploring their environment. Putting things in the mouth is a primary method of learning. Poisonings can occur because of this natural behavior.
- **Toddlers and Preschoolers (1½ years-3 years):** Children in this age group are typically very mobile. They are usually very curious. They can potentially climb and reach higher. Products that look-alike are very deceiving to children of this age. Nothing is childproof. Reinforce with the group that confusion can be caused with products that look the same. Many household products are colorful and very enticing to young children.

b. **Risk Factors and What to do About Them:**

- **Child's Curious Nature:** Children explore, taste and touch to learn.
- **Improper Storage:** Use prevention methods—keep potentially dangerous items out of reach and sight.
- **Adult Distraction:** Telephone call, doorbell, meal preparation, etc. Most poisonings occur when the product is in use. Take the product, or the child with you to answer the door or phone, for example.

8. What are These Poisons and What Should We Do About Them?

Explain the various poisons (examples are listed) and discuss with the class ways to prevent a poisoning. Prevention strategies are outlined in section j below.

- b. **Medicines, Vitamins, and Herbals:** Pain relievers (ibuprofen, acetaminophen, aspirin), cough and cold preparations (decongestants, antihistamines, cough suppressants), vitamins (especially those containing iron), and herbal supplements
- c. **Deadly in a Dose:** These types of medications can be very dangerous or even deadly in just a single dose: antidepressants, narcotics, heart medicine, high blood pressure medicine, and diabetic medicine.
- d. **Household Products:** Bleach, drain and toilet bowl cleaner, laundry products (laundry packets, fabric softener), ammonia cleaners, dish detergent, and oven cleaners. Many household products and medicines look similar to food, drink, or candy. **Show the participants the look-alike products** (ideas include; blue window cleaner/blue sports drink, medicine/candy, pine-cleaner/apple juice) to demonstrate the confusion that can occur with products that look the same. Many household products are colorful and enticing to young children. Alternatively, use the look-alike handout* to teach this concept
- e. **Cosmetics and Personal Care Products:** Mouthwash, toothpaste, nail products, shampoo, perfume, talcum powder, lotion, and make-up.
- f. **Topicals:** Acne preparations, diaper products, cortisone cream, and athletic rub.
- g. **Lawn/Garden and Car Care Products:** Gasoline, motor oil, windshield wiper fluid, pesticides, herbicides, and anti-freeze.

- h. **Miscellaneous Poisons:** Plants, foreign bodies (coins, button batteries, magnets), food poisoning, and bites or stings (rattlesnakes, bees, wasps, black widow spider, hobo spider, ticks, bats, scorpions)
- i. **Seasonal Poison Hazards:** Discuss content of seasonal poison hazard infographics* (optional)
- j. **Prevention Strategies:** Discuss the following prevention strategies.
 - **Out of Sight and Out of Reach:** Keep poisons out of the reach of children. Never leave open products unattended.
 - **Locks, Lids, and Latches:** There are many different types available. Choose what works best for you. **Child Resistant** does **NOT** mean **Child Proof**. It simply provides a few more minutes to catch the child in the act.
 - **Medicines:** Follow dosing instructions carefully. Be aware of multiple ingredients. Close the lid tightly after using a medicine. Never call medicine “candy”. Do not take your medicine when children are watching.
 - **Other Prevention Strategies:** Follow instructions for product use. Protect skin and eyes from contact. Do not mix cleaning products. Store products in original containers. Use cleaning products in well-ventilated areas. Do not follow first aid instructions listed on the product.
 - **Do not waste time searching the Internet:** Searching the internet wastes valuable time and may lead to ineffective or even dangerous results. Call the poison center right away. **Save** the poison center number in your phone for quick access 1-800-222-1222.
- k. **Carbon Monoxide Poisoning (CO):** CO is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas. Signs of CO poisoning include; headache, fatigue, nausea, dizziness, and in severe cases, irregular breathing, mental confusion, unconsciousness, death. Show CO infographic*.
Prevention:
 - Install a CO detector near sleeping areas
 - Never operate gas burning appliances, machines, or equipment in an enclosed space such as the garage, tents, indoors
 - Have chimney and flue cleaned professionally
 - Have furnace inspected annually

9. Adult Poisonings

- a. **Poisoning is not just a problem for children:** Explain that adults are also at risk for poisoning. Approximately 25% of calls to the UPCC each year are for adults over age 19. That equates to about 10,000 calls. **The most common substances involved in adult poisonings are pain relievers and sedatives.**

10. How Do We Respond To a Poisoning?

- a. **Emergency Action First Aid Tips:** Explain what to do for each type of poison exposure. Emphasize the importance of calling the poison center.
 - **Swallowed poison:** Do not give anything and **do not** induce vomiting. Show infographic*
 - Call the poison control center

*Item is located in the appendix

- **Inhaled poison:** Get victim to fresh air. Call poison control center.
 - **Poison on skin:** Remove contaminated clothing and rinse skin with water for 10-15 minutes. Call the poison control center.
 - **Poison in eye:** Flush eye for 15 minutes using a large cup filled with lukewarm water held 2-4 inches from eye. Call the poison control center.
 - **Other Important Tips:** Remain calm, but do not wait for the victim to become sick since some symptoms can be delayed and waiting can be a serious mistake. If the victim is unconscious call 911.
- b. **Calling the UPCC:** Discuss the following questions that may be asked by the poison information specialist when calling the poison center. Explain that cooperating with the specialists to answer these questions, will help them receive critical information in a timely manner. Emphasize that all information is confidential and free of charge:
- How is the person feeling or acting right now?
 - What is the age, name, and approximate weight of the person?
 - What product or item was the person exposed to? Have the container with you when you call, if possible.
 - How much of the product do you think the person was exposed to?
 - When did it happen?
 - What is your name and phone number? It is important to give this information so the specialist can call back and check on the person.

11. Video: Making the Right Call

This video focuses on the services that the poison center offers and what it is like to call for help. Scenarios and interviews with callers, poison center, and hospital staff are featured. After viewing, ask class to discuss what stood out to them. Available in English and Spanish on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=357ZL_u7fP0 . Time: 10 minutes

12. Review

- a. **Question/Answer Activity:** Explain that we come in contact with poisons every day. Awareness and simple prevention strategies like those discussed in this lesson can help keep us and children safe. Ask several questions from the lesson to reinforce the message. You may use the objectives of this lesson plan to formulate some of the questions. This can be an informal question/answer period or can be more formal where the questions are asked and small prizes or treats are given for those who answer the questions correctly.
- b. **Call to Action:** Distribute the *Household Guide to Poison Control** handout. Review the potential dangers found in each room. Have the participants refer to their house grids from the Poison Name Game. Encourage participants to use the Household Guide to Poison Control handout as well as the house grid handout from the Poison Name Game and take action to safeguard children by going through each room of their own house and taking safety measures to help prevent a poisoning. Advise them to look at each room from a child's perspective as they complete the checklist at home.

***Item is located in the appendix**

13. Conclusion

- a. **Contact the UPCC:** Do not hesitate to call the poison control center in the event of a poisoning. Services are **FREE**, and **CONFIDENTIAL**.
- b. **Magnets & Phone Stickers:** If possible, distribute magnets and telephone stickers. Instruct participants to post the poison hotline number in their homes. They can be obtained by contacting the UPCC at 1-800-222-1222.
- c. **Save the number in your phone today:** Save the number for fast, free help. 1-800-222-1222

Resources:

- www.utahsafetycouncil.org
- Making the Right Call video produced by TWIG media lab and the Utah Poison Control Center, 2019. Available in English and Spanish
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=357ZL_u7fP0

Appendix

POISON NAME GAME

Utah Poison Control Center

Instructions: List as many potentially poisonous products as possible in each of the appropriate room grids. When allotted time is over, each participant one-by-one, will read the items on their paper. If more than one person has an item listed, then all participants must cross it out. Participants continue reading their lists and other participants must indicate if they have the same item listed. Those with the most items NOT crossed off, wins the game!



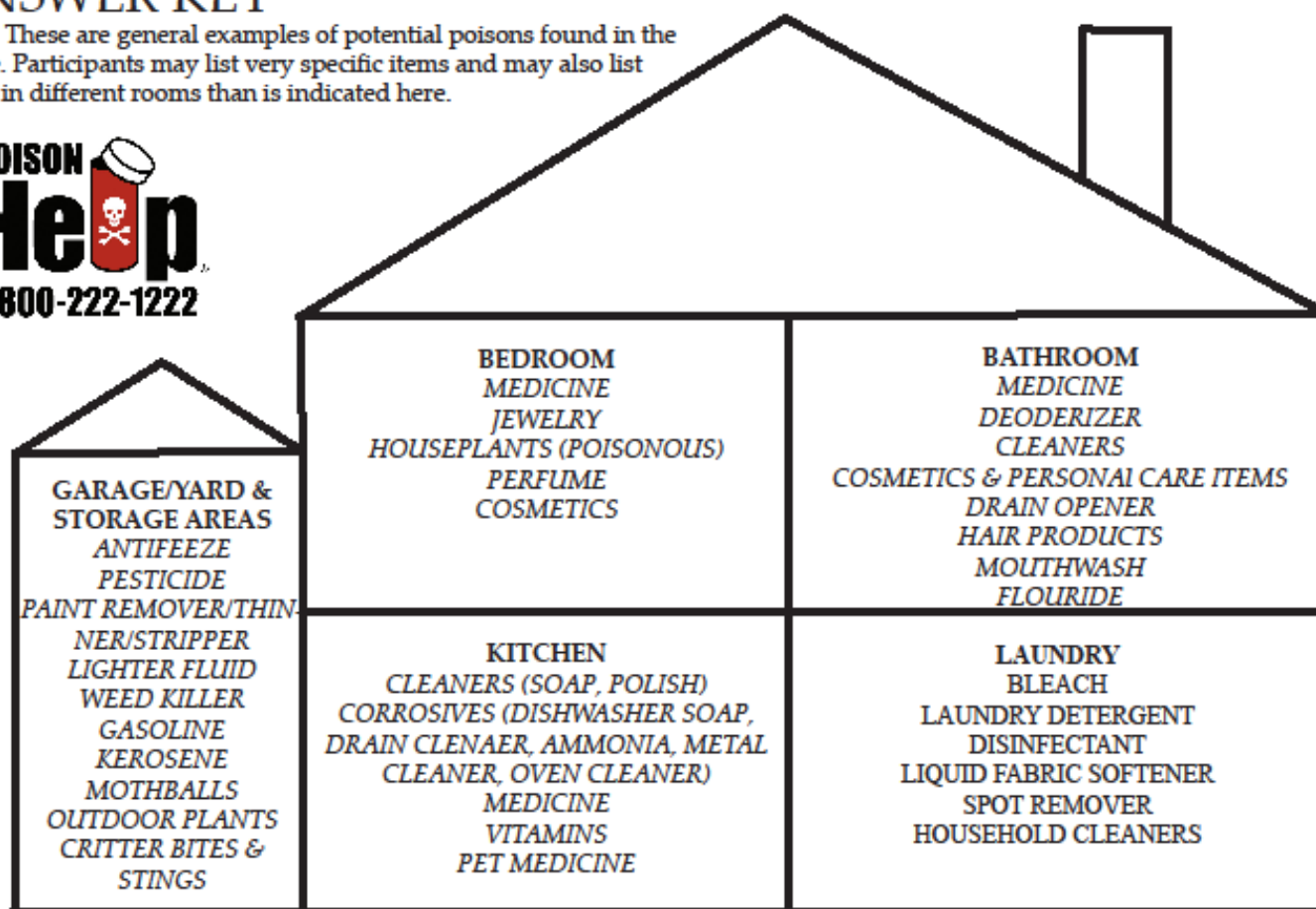
| GARAGE/YARD & STORAGE AREAS | BEDROOM | BATHROOM |
|-----------------------------|---------|----------|
| | KITCHEN | LAUNDRY |

POISON NAME GAME

Utah Poison Control Center

ANSWER KEY

Note: These are general examples of potential poisons found in the home. Participants may list very specific items and may also list them in different rooms than is indicated here.



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Look-Alike Display

A look-alike display is a variety of poisonous items that look almost identical to non-poisonous items. The purpose of the look-alike display is to show parents and children how easily a poison can be mistaken for something good to eat or drink.

Look-alike examples:

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Comet | Parmesan cheese |
| Grape cough syrup | Grape Juice |
| Cherry cough syrup | Fruit punch |
| Pine Sol | Apple juice |
| Bleach | Milk (in half gallon jug) |
| Muscle Cream | Toothpaste |

****To find additional pairs, simply go to a grocery store and walk up the cleaner aisle and juice/sports drink section. You will be amazed at the large number of look-alikes out there!**

Medicine and candy display

A medicine and candy display is a very effective way to show adults how difficult it can be to distinguish between medicine and candy. Pass the box around during presentations.

Materials:

One 8x 10 clear plastic shadow box available at any craft store

One 8 x 10 colored sheet of paper

One each of the following pairs:

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| White Necco wafer | Alka seltzer |
| Orange or red aspergum | Orange or red chiclet |
| Green Drixoryl pill | Green M&M candy |
| Red Sudafed pill | Red hot candy |
| Flavored Tums | Same flavor Sweettart |
| Orange Motrin | Orange Skittle |

- Title the 8 X 10 piece of paper "Can you tell the difference? Your child probably can't. Make a column for medicine and candy. Place the paper into the shadow box.
- Glue each piece of candy in a vertical row under the candy header and the medicine in a vertical row under the medicine header next to the appropriate name.
- **Note: Extra care should be taken with these products if children are present.**



Poisonous Mushrooms
or Edible Mushrooms



Vitamins or Gummy Candies



Medical Cream or Cake Icing

**If you can't tell
the difference,
how can a child?**



Cleaning Supply or Juice



Pain Relievers or Chocolate Candies

REMEMBER



Never call medicine candy to get a child to take it.

Child-resistant doesn't mean child-proof.

Always keep medicines and household products:

- ✓ Up
- ✓ Away
- ✓ Out of sight



Fast. Free. Expert. 24/7,
confidential help.

Almost anything can be poisonous if it's used in the
wrong way, in the wrong amount, or by the wrong person.

If you suspect a poisoning, don't take a chance.

Call 1-800-222-1222.

HOUSEHOLD GUIDE TO POISON CONTROL



This checklist is designed to help parents identify potential hazards in the home. Take some time to go through it and learn what you should do to prevent poisonings.

Poison Safety Checklist for to Make Your Home Safer

Complete the following checklist. See if your home is safe from potential poisons. Check that all poisons are safely stored out of reach of children and pets.

☐ **Check the kitchen:** Household cleaning products are the cause of approximately 10% of poisonings in children under the age of six.

Be aware of these products:

- ☐ Cleaners – carpet/upholstery cleaners, furniture polish, soap/detergents
- ☐ Corrosives – automatic dishwashing detergent, drain cleaners, ammonia, metal cleaners, oven cleaners
- ☐ Medicines – pain relievers (aspirin and acetaminophen), diet aids, vitamin/iron pills, pet medications

What you should know:

- Remove medicines from countertops, window sills, and open areas.
- Put safety latches on all drawers and cabinets where harmful products are stored (Applies throughout the home).
- Store household products away from food.

☐ **Check the bathroom:** Medicines are the cause of approximately 40% of all poisonings.

Be aware of these products:

- ☐ Medicines
- ☐ Mouthwashes
- ☐ Fluoride Rinses
- ☐ Deodorizers
- ☐ Hair Products
- ☐ Aftershaves
- ☐ Cleaners
- ☐ Drain Openers
- ☐ Hair Removers
- ☐ Cosmetics – nail polish/removers, baby powder, perfumes

What you should know:

- Make sure that all medicines are in child-resistant containers and labeled properly.
- Dispose of old medicines properly

☐ **Check the bedroom:** Cosmetics and personal care products are the cause of approximately 12% of poisonings in children under six.

Be aware of these products:

- ☐ Jewelry
- ☐ Medicines
- ☐ House plants – philodendron, dumbcane, pathos

What you should know:

- Remove all medicines from the dresser or bedside table.
- Keep all perfumes, cosmetics, and powders out of reach.

☐ **Check the laundry area:** Bleaches are the most common household cleaning product swallowed by young children.

Be aware of these products:

- ☐ Bleach
- ☐ Laundry detergent
- ☐ Disinfectants



What you should know:

- Keep all products in original containers.
- Keep bleach, stain removers, detergents, and fabric softener out of reach or in a locked cabinet.

☐ **Check the garage/basement/storage areas:** Household chemicals and insecticides are among the most common products that poison adults.

Be aware of these products:

- ☐ Antifreeze
- ☐ Lighter fluid
- ☐ Weed killer
- ☐ Pesticides
- ☐ Mothballs
- ☐ Gasoline/kerosene
- ☐ Paint remover/thinner/stripper



What you should know:

- Keep all products in their original containers.
- Keep insect sprays and weed killers in locked storage.
- Keep turpentine, paints, and rust removers in locked storage.

www.utahpoisoncontrol.org
Poison Control Specialists available 24 hours, 7 days a week
Utah Poison Control Center

POISON
Help
1-800-222-1222



Poison Awareness:

Why You Should NOT
Induce Vomiting



Number One Myth about Poisonings:

If you or your child ingest a poison
you should try to vomit it out



Now Here are the Facts:

- 1** Vomiting can be **MORE DANGEROUS**
than what was swallowed
- 2** You or your child could **CHOKe**
on the vomit
- 3** Some products may burn the
throat --- **vomiting will expose the throat twice**
- 4** Vomiting is **NOT**
effective at getting rid of the poison

If You Or A Child Swallows A Potential Poison- What's the Next Step?

- Do** Remain calm
- Do** Call your local Poison Control Center

1-800-222-1222

Help is Just a Phone Call Away



Poisons in the Home



of Calls to Utah Poison Control Center

- are for kids under age 6 ●

Top 5 Poison exposures for kids under age 6*

1 Cosmetics & Personal Care Products

Toothpaste, makeup, hand sanitizer, deodorant, soap



2 Household Cleaners

Dishwasher detergent, bleach, bathroom cleaner, laundry soap



3 Pain Medication

Prescription and non-prescription pain relievers



4 Vitamins and Minerals

Vitamins with iron and other over-the-counter products



5 Foreign Bodies

Batteries, magnets, toys, coins, misc.



*Based on yearly trends

Call the Poison Center Help line

If you think someone has been poisoned



1-800-222-1222



Utah Poison Control Center

CARBON MONOXIDE



The Silent Killer



WHAT IS CARBON MONOXIDE?



A colorless, odorless, tasteless gas

When you breathe in carbon monoxide (CO) 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

SYMPTOMS OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

Headache, nausea, dizziness

Shortness of breath



At high levels: vomiting, confusion, and loss of consciousness

PREVENTION



Never leave a vehicle running in an enclosed area



Have fuel burning equipment inspected annually



Install carbon monoxide detectors



Only use portable fuel burning equipment outside

PLAY IT SAFE

If you suspect CO poisoning, get to fresh air immediately

If someone is unconscious, call 9-1-1

Otherwise, call the poison control center



**Free and confidential expert help is
just a phone call away
1-800-222-1222**

Utah Poison Control Center

UTAH POISON CONTROL CENTER



Trick or Treat...



FACE PAINT

CHECK THE LABEL:

IT COULD BE **TOXIC**



GLOWSTICKS

IF BROKEN- LIQUID CAN
CAUSE IRRITATION TO
SKIN AND EYES

BUTTON BATTERIES

CAN BE IN COSTUMES, TOYS,
AND DECORATIONS-
CAN BE **VERY** DANGEROUS IF
SWALLOWED

IF YOU ENCOUNTER
A PROBLEM WITH
THESE OR ANY
OTHER ITEMS CALL
THE POISON
CONTROL CENTER

800-222-1222



CANDY CHECKPOINT

CHECK ALL YOUR
CHILD'S CANDY- ANY
UNWRAPPED CANDY
SHOULD BE THROWN
AWAY

DRY ICE

BE CAREFUL WHEN PUTTING IN
PUNCH BOWLS OR INDIVIDUAL
GLASSES- IF IT TOUCHES THE
SKIN IT CAN CAUSE TISSUE
DAMAGE





Utah Poison Control Center



Tips For A Safe And Poison Free Thanksgiving



Alcohol

Keep alcoholic drinks out of the reach of children. Clean up all glasses and cups after parties. Even a small amount of alcohol can cause a serious poisoning

Family Visits

- When visiting other's homes make sure there are no medicines, cleaners or other poison dangers out where children can reach them
- When family and friends visit, be sure their personal belongings are put up and away. People could carry in medicines or other harmful items

Food Safety

When cooking turkey there are several things to keep in mind. For more information on how to stay safe this Thanksgiving visit:

foodsafety.gov





Happy Holidays

From Utah Poison Control Center

Tips to help you stay safe and enjoy the holidays!

Ornaments

Ornaments can be a choking hazard and could have lead in them. Keep these up and out of reach of children.



Toys



Toys may contain button batteries or magnets. These items can be dangerous if swallowed. Before allowing a child to play with a toy, check it for safety.

Alcohol



Alcohol can be dangerous to children. Never leave alcohol unattended and keep it up and out of reach.

Call the Poison Control Center for free poison help 24/7

Winter Poison Hazards

Utah Poison Control Center



*Carbon
Monoxide: The
Silent Killer*

*Install a carbon
monoxide
detector in your
house*

*Have fuel
burning
equipment
inspected
annually*

*Never use gas
burning appliances,
generators or
vehicles in an
enclosed space*

Antifreeze

*Engage the child
resistant closure
after use*

*Do not store in smaller
containers such as soda
bottles or cups. It can be
mistaken for a beverage*

*Cough and Cold
Medicine*

*Check the label before
using multiple products
to avoid overdosing on
acetaminophen*

*Do not set out
medicine for later.
It could be
accidentally
consumed*

Salt

*Commonly found
in ice melt
products*

*Can be harmful if
swallowed or gets
in the eyes*

*Store up and
away from young
children and pets*



Call the Poison
Center for free, fast
help 24/7



