Poisoning Prevention, Infants and Children

For all poisonings, prevention is much better than treatment. Treatment is usually supportive unless antidotes are available. Supportive means you try to combat the problems the poison is causing. This will usually be done in a hospital. The Consumer Product Safety Division (CPSD) recommends that it is a good idea to keep your home child and poison proofed. Watch children closely.

Remember, children will put nearly anything into their mouth and even a cigarette butt has enough nicotine to kill an infant or toddler.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

If you visit someone else's home, ask them if it is child and poison proofed. Here are some suggestions for your own home:

- Use child-proof packaging. Close containers securely after each use.
- Call (800) 222-1222 in the U.S. immediately in case of poisoning.
- If toxic products or medications are in use, **never let young children out of your sight**.
- Keep items in original containers and leave original labels on.
- Read labels before using.
- Do not put decorative lamps and candles that contain lamp oil where children can reach them. Lamp oil can be very toxic if ingested by young children.
- Always leave the light on when giving or taking medicine. Check the dosage every time.
- Avoid taking medicine in front of children. Refer to medicine as medicine not candy.
- Get rid of unneeded and outdated medicines.
- Keep all materials such as charcoal lighter, paint thinner and remover, gasoline, antifreeze and turpentine in safe locked storage. These can cause injury or death to children.
- Other household products that can injure children if swallowed include moth balls, furniture polish, drain cleaners, weed killers, insect or rat poisons, lye, paint thinners, a number of plants and dishwasher detergent.
- If you use poisons for rats or insects, make sure they are labeled and are approved for use in the U.S.

FIRST-AID MEASURES IN POISON INGESTION

- **Do not begin the following suggestions until consulting the local or national poison control center if that is available to you.**
- People not medically trained should not attempt treatment if the patient is drowsy, in shock, convulsing, or unconscious. **Seek local emergency medical treatment** or call 911 in the U.S.
- If the person has ingested petroleum products (gasoline, paint thinner, lighter fluid, etc.), or corrosives (acid or alkali), **DO NOT** induce vomiting.
- Identify poison. Do not panic. Keep under control with your wits about you. Try to lessen fear. Be assured that there are actually few serious poisonings from plants and even fewer fatalities. If you have access to a telephone, immediately call the nearest poison information/control center for instructions.

These are suggestions for home treatment of a poisoning if no advice is available. Always immediately call your poison control center for instructions if that choice is available to you. Also, call your local emergency department (911 in U.S.).

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