

Contact Information:
Najja Howard
312-906-6175 Phone
312-806-9893 Alt Phone

For Immediate Release

Spring Poisons: Bringing More than Flowers

Illinois Poison Center offers poison prevention safety tips for spring season

CHICAGO, Ill. (April 27, 2011) – As the weather grows warmer, seasonal changes can bring about many new hazards. Spring cleaning, gardening, flowers and mushrooms and allergies, are just a few specific spring-time concerns. Each year the Illinois Poison Center (IPC) handles over 90,000 calls, with majority of them involving toxic exposures to everyday products. The Illinois Poison Center (IPC) offers the following poison prevention tips in order to keep you and your family safe this spring season:

Spring Cleaning Safety:

- Keep all cleaning products in their original containers with original labels
- Never mix cleaning products
- Work in well-ventilated areas when using cleaning product
- Store all cleaning products away from food/beverages and out of reach of children and pets

Lawn Care and Gardening:

- Label all the plants in and around the house with their common and botanical names. Check with a local greenhouse or florist to identify unknown plants (poison plant information and poster available on IPC's website)
- Teach children never to put mushrooms, berries or any part of a plant into their mouths
- Always store lawn chemicals in the original containers, complete with labels that list ingredients, directions for use and first-aid steps in case of an accidental poisoning
- Do not apply pesticides outdoors on a windy day and keep children and pets away during pesticide application for as long as directed on the product label

Seasonal Allergy Medication:

- Consult with your physician or pharmacist for more information about taking the right seasonal allergy medication
- Read the label before every use, and follow the directions
- Never take someone else's prescribed medication

"The beginning of spring is an exciting time for families; there is a rush of activity with play time, gardening, cleaning, painting and a whole host of other family projects," said Dr. Michael Wahl, Medical Director, IPC. "It is very important that we take a little extra time to make sure that little ones are safe from the cleaners, fertilizers and other chemicals we have out this time of year."

In the event a poisoning occurs, the IPC suggests the following simple first aid tips:

Poison in the Mouth:

- Call the poison center (1-800-222-1222), whether a potentially harmful substance was swallowed or not.
- Do not make the person vomit, or give the victim something to eat or drink unless the poison center tells you to do so.

Poison on the Skin:

- Take off clothes that have potentially harmful substance on them.
- Rinse the skin very well with water. Then wash the skin with soap and water.

Poison in the Eye:

- Remove contact lenses (if worn).
- Rinse the eyes with water for 15 minutes.
- Open and close the eyes while rinsing.

Poison in the Air:

- Open windows and doors to let in fresh air.
- Leave the area and move to a place where you can breathe fresh air.
- Help others leave the area, but be careful not to breathe the poison yourself

The general public and healthcare professionals can obtain free, confidential poison prevention advice and treatment recommendations from the Illinois Poison Center experts via its 24-hour hotline at 1-800-222-1222. For more spring poison prevention tips please visit the Illinois Poison Center website – www.illinoispoisoncenter.org.

###

The Illinois Poison Center is a non-profit health service that provides the people of Illinois with comprehensive and trusted information and treatment advice on potentially harmful substances via a free, confidential 24-hour hotline staffed by specially trained doctors, nurses and pharmacists.

The nation's oldest and largest poison center, the IPC is the state's leading source of advanced toxicology training and consultation to healthcare professionals. The IPC also educates the general public on poison prevention and potentially harmful substances via community outreach and online training programs.

Through its services, the IPC saves lives, improves patient care and saves the people of Illinois an estimated \$50 million annually in unnecessary healthcare costs by reducing 911 calls, doctor and ER visits, and time spent in hospitals.

The IPC is a program of the Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council.