



Illinois Poison Center  
**POISON  
HELP**  
1•800•222•1222

# Caregivers Guide to Poison Prevention

## What substances can be poisonous?

Any substance or product can be poisonous if it causes an unwanted or unexpected reaction. The reaction can range from something as mild as a rash or stomach ache to something more serious resulting in hospitalization or death.

### HOW DO POISONINGS HAPPEN?

- **Ingestion**—Eating or drinking something
- **Skin contact**—Splashing, spilling or rubbing something on the skin
- **Eye contact**—Splashing a harmful substance into the eye
- **Inhalation**—Breathing dangerous fumes
- **Bites/stings**—Getting bitten/stung by insects, snakes or spiders

### PREVENTION TIPS

- **Teach** children to “always ask first” before eating or drinking anything you haven’t given them.
- **Store** potentially harmful products in cabinets with child-resistant safety locks or up high and out of reach.
- **Don’t** store cleaning products and food/beverages in the same cabinets or areas.
- **Keep** all potentially poisonous substances in their original container with original labels, including cleaners, medicines, supplements, herbals, and products used for home repair, gardening and automobiles.
- **Always** read labels and directions before using potentially poisonous substances. Use only as directed.
- **Close** all containers tightly immediately after use.
- **Rinse** out all empty containers for products such as bleaches and cleaners before discarding.
- **Save/post** the Illinois Poison Center’s 1-800-222-1222 helpline number in, on or near all phones.



### MEDICINE SAFETY

Children, especially toddlers, are often curious about medicines. Take extra precautions with medications you may have around the house, in your bag(s) and vehicle:

- **Keep** medicines in their original containers and store them in locked cabinets.
- **Don’t** place or store medications within reach of children.
- **Use** child-resistant containers for medications in your purse or backpack. **Note:** Daily pill containers/organizers may be child-resistant but they are not child-proof.
- **Dispose** of old or unused medications: <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/safe-disposal-medicines/disposal-unused-medicines-what-you-should-know>
- **Never** call medicine candy or make a game out of taking it.
- **Always** turn on a light and wear your glasses, if necessary, when taking or giving medicines.



## HANDBAG/PURSE/ BACKPACK SAFETY

Don't allow children to play with your or others' handbag, purse or backpack. Many things in them can be hazardous if they get into a young child's mouth. These include makeup, perfumes, ointment/creams, medications, hand sanitizer and cannabis edibles. Some of these items may also pose a choking hazard.



## FREE SAFETY PACKET AND EDUCATION

Request a free Complimentary Safety Packet in English and/or Spanish: <https://tinyurl.com/ipc-safety-packet>

Complete our free online Poison Prevention Education Course with free continuing education credit: <https://tinyurl.com/ipc-course>

Visit our My Child Ate... webpages for more safety information: <https://tinyurl.com/my-child-ate>



## ABOUT THE ILLINOIS POISON CENTER

The Illinois Poison Center is dedicated to preventing poisonings and providing free, confidential treatment advice to the public and healthcare professionals. Our 1-800-222-1222 helpline is staffed by nurses and pharmacists formally trained in toxicology and are specialists in providing poison information. Helpline staff are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.



## HOUSEHOLD CHECKLIST

Store products high and out of reach of children. Also keep children away from potentially poisonous items in nature.

### KITCHEN

- Soaps
- Dish Detergent
- Furniture Polish
- Drain Cleaners
- Oven Cleaners
- Floor Cleaners
- Ant/Roach Killers
- Mouse/Rat Poison
- Alcohols

### BEDROOM

- Cosmetics
- Perfume
- Baby Powder
- Medicines

### BATHROOM

- Medicines
- Supplements
- Mouthwash
- Cleaning Supplies
- Shampoos
- Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Eye Drops

### LIVING ROOM

- Plants
- Cigarettes

### LAUNDRY ROOM

- Bleach
- Detergent
- Cleaners

### GARAGE OR STORAGE AREAS

- Antifreeze
- Pesticides
- Gasoline
- Paint Removers
- Weed Killers
- Windshield Fluids
- Gas/Oil Treatments

### OUTDOOR

- Pesticides
- Herbicides
- Fertilizers
- Lamp/Tiki Torch Oil

### OTHER

- Herbals
- Cannabis Edibles
- Nicotine Products
- Batteries
- Craft Supplies
- Small Magnets
- Nail Polish and Products
- Plants (indoor/outdoor)
- Mushrooms
- Snakes
- Spiders
- Insects



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