

PoisonSmarts



Rocky Mountain Poison Center's quarterly prevention tips
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Late fall and early winter bring cold weather and a new set of poison hazards. The Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center highlights some of this season's poisons and reminds you to call 1-800-222-1222 anytime night or day for free and confidential PoisonHelp.

Antifreeze and winter windshield washer fluid: Both taste sweet and are very toxic in small amounts. Washer fluid is blue and looks good enough to drink. Dogs and cats will readily drink this poison, which can cause kidney damage and death.

First Aid: There is no first aid that can be done at home. Do not watch for symptoms, which can be delayed. Call the Rocky Mountain Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 at the first discovery that a poisoning might have occurred.

Prevention: Keep in original container with its child resistant cap. It's best to store in a locked cabinet out of reach and out of sight of children. Spills on garage floors and driveways need to be wiped up immediately.

Ice melt: May contain salt or salts of potassium, calcium or magnesium. Can cause mouth or stomach irritation and systemic effects if eaten in large amounts. Contact with paws of our furry friends can result in irritation.

First Aid: Call the Rocky Mountain Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 right away. If on skin or paws, wash with mild soap and warm water then rinse for 10 minutes.

Prevention: Store out of sight and reach in a locked cabinet. Sweep off driveway & sidewalks.

Holiday parties/guests: Calls about kids getting into alcohol & tobacco increase during this season. Visitors may carry medicine in their purses and luggage.

Prevention: Empty cocktail glasses & ashtrays immediately after a party. Provide guests a locked place to stow their purses, backpacks or luggage out of reach and sight from curious little ones. When traveling with kids, check your surroundings and remove poisonous products from their reach.

First Aid: Call 1-800-222-1222 anywhere in the U.S. to reach your nearest poison center.

Check out additional Holiday Poison Prevention Tips, Food Safety, Carbon Monoxide and other poison prevention tips at www.rmpdc.org; Click on Poison Prevention Tips. To obtain PoisonHelp guides, magnets or stickers, call 1-800-222-1222; choose option 4. Questions? Contact Mary Hilko at 303-739-1247 or mary.hilko@rmpdc.org.

See other side to read the latest about over-the-counter cough and cold medicine use in young children.





Poison in the News

Over-the-Counter Cough and Cold Medicines in Children

“[Posted 10/09/2008] FDA notified healthcare professionals and consumers that the Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA) is voluntarily modifying the product labels for consumers of over the counter (OTC) cough and cold medicines to state "do not use" in children under 4 years of age. FDA supports CHPA members to help prevent and reduce misuse and to better inform consumers about the safe and effective use of these products for children. FDA continues to assess the safety and efficacy of these products and to revise its OTC list of approved ingredients and amounts for these medicines. Parents and care givers should adhere to the dosage instructions and warnings on the label that accompanies OTC cough and cold medications before giving the product to children, and should consult their healthcare professionals if they have any questions or concerns.” Read the entire 2008 MedWatch Safety Summaries, including a link to the FDA Press Release regarding the above issue at: <http://www.fda.gov/medwatch/safety/2008/safety08.htm#CoughCold>

“The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) strongly recommends that over-the-counter cough and cold medications not be given to infants and children younger than 2 years because of the risk of life-threatening side effects. *Also, several studies show that cold and cough products don't work in children younger than 6 years and can have potentially serious side effects.*”* Refer to the following website from the AAP for tips to prevent viral infections and comfort measures to relieve stuffy nose, cough, chest congestion and fever.

*Source: www.aap.org/publiced/BR_Infections.htm

To prevent unintentional overdoses of medicine, the Rocky Mountain Poison Center reminds you to:

- Check with your doctor or pharmacist for the right dosage for your child's age and size.
- Read the label carefully and understand the directions before giving the dose. If needed, call the doctor, pharmacist or the poison center with questions.
- Use the measuring device that comes with the medicine or those specially made for measuring drugs. Everyday household spoons vary in size and aren't meant for giving medicine. Infant drops are concentrated compared to syrups of the same medicine. Using the wrong device can result in an overdose.
- Keep a medicine log on a lined tablet. Write down the exact name of the medicine, time given and amount as soon as the dose is given. If other caregivers are involved such as a babysitter, day-care provider, other parent or grandparent, check with them to see if any medicine was given on their watch.
- Buy over the counter medicines with child-resistant safety caps. After use, make sure to close the cap tightly; store the medicine out of sight and reach of the children. **Child-resistant caps are not childproof.**