

Poison Prevention Press

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MPC Poison Safety Info on the Go

Get important poison safety tips and other information wherever you are.

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mdpoison.com

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Text "POISON" to 797979 to save and share the Poison Center contact card.

Did you know that...

- In 2020, 11% of the exposures in tweens at the MPC were intentional?
- In 2020, 69% of the exposures in teens at the MPC were intentional?

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What Tweens and Teens Should Know About the Poison Center

People often think that poison centers are only for little kids, but that's not true. Poison centers are for everyone, including tweens (6-12 years old) and teens (13-19 years old). They accounted for 13.8% of cases at the Maryland Poison Center (MPC) in 2020. As children get older, they are more independent in their day-to-day life, leading to the potential for more poison exposures. If you have or work with a tween or teen, share this information with them!

What is a Poison?

A poison is anything that is taken in the wrong way, wrong amount, or by the wrong person. Swallowing a substance is the most common way people are poisoned. You can also be poisoned by inhaling something, getting something on your skin, or getting something in your eye.

Top Five Exposures in 2020

The top five substance categories that tweens and teens were exposed to in 2020:

1. Pain Relievers
2. Antidepressants
3. Stimulants and Street Drugs
4. Antihistamines
5. Cosmetics and Personal Care Products

Over-The-Counter Medicine Safety

Over-the-counter (OTC) medicines can be bought at the store or online without a prescription. These include medicines that treat pain, allergies, cold and flu symptoms, etc. OTC medicine is not "safer" than prescription medicine. All medicines can be harmful if they aren't used correctly. Every OTC medicine has a label that includes instructions on how much to take and how often to take it. Always read the label before taking a medicine and follow the directions. Taking more than the directed amount will not help you feel better faster. If you use more than one OTC medicine, be sure to check the active ingredients in the medicines. If two medicines have the same active ingredients, you can be taking too much of that ingredient.

Prescription Medicine Safety

Prescription medicines are only available with a prescription from a health care provider. They are not always "safer" than OTC medicines. Again, all medicines can be harmful if they are not used correctly. They are also not always "safer" than street drugs. Only take prescription medicines that are prescribed for you. Do not share your prescription medicines with other people. Always follow the instructions on the label each time you take it.

Stimulant Safety

Stimulants aren't just prescription medicines or other drugs; they also include caffeine and nicotine. Children under the age of 12 are not recommended to have any form of caffeine. Pediatricians suggest 12-18-year-olds to limit the amount of caffeine they have to 100mg per day at most. That is equal to about two 12 oz. cans of a caffeinated soda or one 8 oz. cup of coffee.

Tweens and teens can call the poison center on their own, without needing an adult's permission. Any call to the MPC is free and confidential. Our poison specialists will answer your questions and help you if you are experiencing an unexpected or unwanted effect from using a product. We are ready to take your call 24/7/365 at 1-800-222-1222.