



poison prevention press

Help Support the MPC

Funding for the Maryland Poison Center comes from federal and state sources as well as grants and contracts. State funding is not a line item in the Maryland budget; it is part of the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy operating budget. When budget cuts are applied to higher education, they could lead to a reduction in the MPC operating budget. Federal funding has decreased by 20% in the last year with additional cuts expected. Show your support for poison centers by contacting your senators and representatives in Washington DC by going to www.capwiz.com/aapcc then click on "Take Action".

Did you know that...

The MPC managed 1261 human exposures to pesticides in 2011; 622 of these were in children under the age of 6 years old.

The MPC managed 575 human exposures to plants in 2011; 376 of these were in children under the age of 6 years old.

Post and share this edition of Poison Prevention Press with your colleagues, friends and family. Read past issues of Poison Prevention Press and subscribe to the newsletter at www.mdpoison.com

Petals, Pollen, Pools and...Poison

Spring had sprung! The weather is warm, trees are in full bloom, the children are outside playing—all clear signs that spring is here. There are other signs that spring is here—some that may put your family at risk. This is also the time of year that many of us set aside for “spring cleaning”. Others can’t wait to get out in the yard to begin the quest for the perfect lawn and garden. Still others have swimming pools they are preparing to open. Are there hidden dangers here?



The Maryland Poison Center (MPC), located at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy in Baltimore, is always ready to answer the call about unintentional and intentional exposures to household products and medications. In fact, the MPC answered just over 63,000 calls in 2011. Of these, approximately 35,000 were human exposures (information calls and animals calls accounted for the balance). And over 16,000 of the exposures were in children who were 5 years old and under. The MPC would like to help keep your family safe from the spring-time hazards that are waiting for them.

Since many households use springtime as the excuse to do major cleaning, children may have greater access to household cleaners. Make sure cleaners are stored in safe places and out of the reach of children. Remember, children like to help and imitate adult behavior. However, some cleaning products should not be handled by children because they can be harmful if they are gotten in the eyes, in the mouth or on a child’s sensitive skin. Many cleaners look like juices and soft drinks that our children drink. If they see the bottle of cleaner, they may get confused and think it is something for them to drink. Finally, resist the temptation to bring the industrial cleaners home from work in soda or water bottles. The MPC has consulted on tragic cases where this was done, and the cleaner was accidentally consumed, causing significant injury in children and adults.

When working on the lawn and garden, be certain to read and follow the directions for use and storage on fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. Some poisons can cause symptoms after they are absorbed through the skin or inhaled. If children are playing in the grass shortly after applying a lawn product, be sure to wash them off as soon as they come in the house. Wipe off the feet and nose of dogs that have been on freshly treated grass. Know the names of the flowers and plants growing in your yard. Some may be poisonous and knowing the name will enable the poison center staff to give the proper advice should a small child eat a part of a plant, bud or berry.

When getting ready to open the family pool, be sure to open the pool chemicals in a well-ventilated area, preferably outside. Gases can build up in the containers after winter storage. These gases can be irritating to the eyes, nose and lungs.

The Maryland Poison Center wishes a safe spring to all. Remember, help from the poison experts is only a phone call away! If you suspect an unintentional poisoning has occurred, call 1-800-222-1222 immediately. Do not wait for symptoms. Go to our website, www.mdpoison.com for more information or to order educational materials for your home.



Follow the MPC on Facebook!