

Calls to the Maryland Poison Center in 2014

The Maryland Poison Center is certified by the American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC) as a regional poison center and has provided poisoning treatment advice, education, and prevention services to Marylanders since 1972. Maryland Poison Center pharmacists and nurses with toxicology training answer calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year. In 2014, these specialists in poison information handled 48,407 calls: 31,055 human poisonings, 1,141 animal poisonings and 16,211 poison and drug information calls.

- Most of the calls (64%) came from the patient's residence or another residence. There were 7,583 calls from health care facilities (hospitals, clinics, physician offices, clinics) and 1,829 calls from EMS providers and 911.
- 43% of poisonings involved children 5 years old and younger.
- Poisonings in older adults are often more serious. People over the age of 60 accounted for 9% of poisonings but 23% of fatalities in 2014.
- Medication errors (e.g. wrong doses, wrong medicines, drug interactions) were the cause of 15% of poisonings overall. However, in patients ≥ 60 years old, 45% of exposures involved medication errors.
- The majority of cases (>63%) were managed safely at home, work or school, saving millions of dollars in unnecessary medical expenses.
- In 2014, 73% of all poisonings involved drugs, most commonly prescription and over-the-counter analgesics followed by sedatives/hypnotics/antipsychotics.
- The table below shows the top 3 substance categories by age groups:

Children ≤ 5 yrs	Older children & teens 6-19 yrs	Adults 20-59 yrs	Seniors ≥ 60 yrs
Cosmetics/Personal care products (15%)	Analgesics (20%)	Sedatives/hypnotics/antipsychotics (23%)	Cardiovascular medicines (24%)
Household cleaners (12%)	Antihistamines (8%)	Analgesics (23%)	Analgesics (13%)
Analgesics (10%)	Stimulants & street drugs (7%)	Alcohols (11%)	Sedatives/hypnotics/antipsychotics (12%)



Did you know?

For every dollar invested in the U.S. poison center system, \$13.39 is saved in health care costs and lost productivity, a savings of \$1.8 billion each year.

Poison specialists provide immediate treatment advice and frequently make follow-up calls to give further recommendations and document outcomes.

The true measure of the effectiveness of the poison center is in patient outcomes.

In 2014, 88% of cases resulted in (or were expected to result in) no effects or minor effects.

To view our **Data Snapshot - 2014**, go to www.mdpoison.com/factsandreports



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