

## 2018 Maryland Poison Center Cases

The Maryland Poison Center (MPC) is a program of the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy and is certified by the American Association of Poison Control Centers as a regional poison center. The MPC has been providing poisoning treatment advice, education, and prevention services to Marylanders since 1972. Maryland Poison Center pharmacists and nurses who are nationally certified as Specialists in Poison Information answer calls 24 hours a day, every day of the year. In 2018, our experts managed more than 39,000 cases: 30,709 human poisonings, 1,143 animal poisonings, and 7,463 poison or drug information calls.

- 39% of poisonings involved children 5 years old and younger.
- A medication error (e.g. wrong dose, wrong medicine, drug interaction) was the cause of 15% of poisonings overall. However, in patients  $\geq 60$  years old, 42% of exposures involved medication errors.
- In 9,543 cases (31%), calls originated from health care facilities (e.g. hospitals, clinics, physician offices). The poison center referred an additional 1,640 patients to health care facilities.
- EMS providers, firefighters and 911 dispatchers contacted the MPC for advice on managing more than 1,700 patients. Based on recommendations from the MPC Specialists, at least 160 patients were treated at the site without transporting to a health care facility for further medical care.
- 82% of all cases handled by the MPC resulted in (or were expected to result in) no effect or only minor effects.
- People over the age of 60 accounted for 9.8% of poisonings but >16% of fatalities.

### Top 3 substance categories by age groups:

Children $\leq 5$ yrs (n=11,951)	Older children & teens 6-19 yrs (n=4,963)	Adults 20-59 yrs (n=10,349)	Seniors $\geq 60$ yrs (n=3,008)
Cosmetics/Personal care products (13%)	Analgesics (17%)	Analgesics (20%)	Cardiovascular medicines (25%)
Household cleaners (11%)	Antidepressants (11%)	Sedatives/ Hypnotics/ Antipsychotics (17%)	Analgesics (16%)
Analgesics (9%)	Stimulants & street drugs (8%)	Stimulants & street drugs (14%)	Sedatives/ Hypnotics/ Antipsychotics (11%)



### Did you know?

**MPC pharmacists and nurses made over 35,000 follow-up calls in 2018.**

Follow-up calls are made to homes, schools and workplaces to make sure that patients remain asymptomatic or that any symptoms resolve. When the poison center is consulted regarding a patient being treated in a health care facility, our poison specialists continue to communicate with clinicians, making additional treatment recommendations as needed and collecting data on the patient's progress and outcome. Studies show that patients managed with poison center expertise and assistance experience shorter hospitalizations.

*Coming soon to [www.mdpoison.com](http://www.mdpoison.com): our complete 2018 Annual Report and data reports for every Maryland County and Baltimore City.*



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