

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

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Poison Prevention Week

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National Poison Prevention Week

National Poison Prevention Week is March 19–25, 2006. This national awareness week is organized each year by the Poison Prevention Week Council, a coalition of national organizations working to prevent poisonings.

Unintentional poisoning is second only to motor vehicle crashes as a leading cause of unintentional injury death in the United States. Children, adolescents, and adults are all affected by unintentional poisoning.

An estimated 578,000 patients were treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments in 2004 for unintentional poisonings. Almost 25% required hospitalization or transfer for a higher level of care.



In 2004, poison control centers reported about 2.4 million incidents where people were exposed to poison. U.S. poison control centers handle an average of one poison exposure every 13 seconds. About 85% of these exposures are unintentional. More than 90% of poison exposures occur in the home.

Just over half the poison exposures reported to poison control centers affect children younger than six years; exposures in this group commonly involve cosmetics and personal care products, cleaning substances, pain relievers, topical medications, foreign bodies, cough and cold preparations, and plants. Adult exposures often include pain relievers, sedatives, or cleaning substances.

The nationwide toll-free number for poison control centers, 1-800-222-1222, is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call for assistance with poisoning emergencies, questions about a specific poison, or information about poison prevention.

Information about National Poison Prevention Week is available from the [National Poison Prevention Week Council](#) website. CDC also has information about [poisonings](#), how to [prevent poisonings](#), a recent [report on unintentional medication exposures in young children](#), and a [report on death rates due to unintentional and undetermined poisoning between 1990 and 2001](#).

Contact Information

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