

Think Safe Be Safe: Poison Prevention Tips

Home Safety Council research shows that poisoning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury related death in the home. According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC) more than 92 percent of the 2.3 million poison exposures reported in the latest year studied occurred in the home. Yet, the Home Safety Council found that most families are not taking the appropriate precautions to reduce the risk of poison exposure.

Poison prevention is for everyone, not just children. The Home Safety Council's poisoning prevention advice can help individuals and families keep their homes safer from poisonous and toxic products, chemicals and gases, regardless of the ages of the occupants. Homes with young children need to take extra precautions. Follow these guidelines to keep your family safe from poison exposures at home:



- Make sure all potentially dangerous products (household cleaners, medicines, and typical garage items like antifreeze and pesticides) all have child resistant closures on them, are locked up, and are stored in high places.



- Homes with young children should have child locks installed on cabinets.



- Store food and non-food products separately. This protects consumers in the event of a leak in the product and reduces any possible confusion between items.



- Make sure all medicines and prescriptions have not expired. If they have expired they should be flushed down the toilet and not thrown away in the garbage.



- Immediately mop up puddles of anti-freeze and car oil in the garage or driveway. They are extremely harmful to children and pets.



- Read the use and storage directions before using products. Original labels on product containers often give important first-aid information.



- Wear gloves and follow manufacturer's instructions when using harsh chemicals or cleaners.
- Do not mix household products, because their contents could react together with dangerous results.



- Post the national poison control hotline (1-800-222-1222) next to every phone.



- To prevent carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, have your home heating equipment inspected annually and install a UL-listed CO alarm near every sleeping area.

Walk through the most common rooms where potentially harmful products are stored including the kitchen, bathrooms and garage. Learn more about room-by-room poison prevention in Home Safety Council's safety guide.

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