

National Poison Prevention Week
Poison Prevention Lasts a Lifetime

During **National Poison Prevention Week**, the third week of March, it is important to remember that an unintentional (or accidental) poisoning is most likely to occur in the home. Nearly half of these incidents will involve a child under the age of six. Poison prevention should be a priority in every household. Most unintentional poisonings can be prevented with some common-sense steps. These include:

- Keep all household chemicals and medications out of sight in a **locked cabinet**. Once children are older than 12-18 months, putting things “up high” isn’t safe enough since many young children are fearless climbers.
- Always store chemicals, cleaners, and medications in their **original containers**. Many poisonings occur when a product is put into an unlabeled jar, plastic bag or box. Even adults can be fooled by laundry bleach in a beverage glass - it looks just like lemonade!
- Use **child-resistant closures**, but realize that these are NOT “child-proof” and many children under the age of four can open them . . . it just takes a little more time. These closures are still an important tool in making the home more “poison proof”.
- Post the telephone number for your regional poison center near the telephone, along with other emergency numbers. Throughout the USA, the number is **1-800-222-1222**. Call right away if you suspect a poisoning.

Despite our best efforts, someone may swallow the wrong amounts of medication or ingest other products, or they may splash chemicals onto skin or into their eyes. When a potential poisoning occurs, **the correct FIRST action to take is always an immediate call to the Virginia Poison Center**. The experts there will tell you what to do right away. Most of the time, poisonings can be treated without going to the doctor, with help from the poison center.

The Virginia Poison Center is a free emergency service, available twenty-four hours daily to assist in the care of persons of all ages who may have been exposed to poisonous chemicals, venoms, vapors, plants or medications.

For a free poison prevention brochure, and a telephone sticker, please contact us.

Virginia Poison Center

PO Box 980522

VCU Medical Center

Richmond, VA 23298-0522

Non-emergency: (804) 828-4780

Emergency: (800) 222-1222 or (804) 828-9123

www.vapoison.org

