

The New Jersey Poison Information & Education System — Serving New Jersey Since 1983

NEWS RELEASE

Media Contacts:
800-222-1222 (800-962-1253 outside NJ)

BREAKING NEWS

-- Candy Lookalike Laundry Detergent Pod Involved in Death of an Infant --

Steven Marcus, MD, Executive and Medical Director
Bruce Ruck, Pharm.D., Director, Drug Information and Professional Education
New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES)

Available for Interviews

(Newark, NJ) – August 16, 2013 —Media in Florida are reporting the death of a 7-month-old from ingesting laundry detergent packets. Poison Centers across the country have been warning the public about the dangers of these detergent pods for some time. Nationally, poison centers continue to receive calls daily about exposures of children to laundry detergents packaged in small, single-dose packets.

The NJ Poison Experts want to remind parents and caregivers that young children may be drawn to these candy-like pods because of their bright colors and sweet scent. "These laundry detergent packets can be easily mistaken for candy by children and even adults", said Bruce Ruck, Pharm.D, Director of Drug Information and Professional Education at the NJ Poison Center located at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. "The rapid onset of potentially life threatening symptoms is of great concern although we aren't certain exactly what in the product is making the children sick." The experts strongly urge parents and caregivers to make sure laundry detergent packets are not accessible to young kids by locking them up and keeping them out of sight.

The following are examples of exposures to children who have become ill from concentrated laundry detergent packets:

- Ten minutes after a 20-month-old swallowed a laundry detergent packet; the child developed profuse vomiting, wheezing and gasping and then became unresponsive to even painful stimuli.
- A 15-month-old bit into a pack and swallowed a mouthful had profuse vomiting and, after arrival at a hospital, had to be put on a ventilator.
- A 17-month-old bit into a packet and then rapidly developed drowsiness, vomited, breathed the product into the lungs, and had to be put on a ventilator.

The NJ Poison Experts recommend the following steps:

- Always keep detergents locked up and out of the reach of children.
- Follow the specific disposal instructions on the label.
- If you think a child has been exposed to a laundry detergent packet, call the NJ Poison Experts at 1-800-222-1222 immediately.

It is good to know help is just a phone call away. If someone is unconscious, not breathing, seizing/convulsing, bleeding profusely, difficult to arouse/wake up, etc. call 911 immediately, otherwise call the NJ Poison Center at 800-222-1222.

While a quick web search may seem like an easy option, it is no substitute for calling the poison center and speaking with medical experts (doctors, nurses, and pharmacists). A mistreated exposure can escalate an easy-in-home treatment into a trip to the hospital. In the event of a poison exposure, every second counts so calling the poison center is the smart thing to do!! You may also chat or text in using our website, www.njpies.org.

The NJ Poison Experts are always here to help with emergencies or questions involving medicines, chemicals, household products, environmental contaminants, plants, or other poisons. Help is available in more than 150 languages; 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year. Program the Poison Help line (800-222-1222) into your cell phone and post it near your home and office phones too. There are no silly questions and our health professionals are always available to answer a question, quell a fear, provide advice, or intervene to get emergency services on site and prepped to provide the needed protocol in the fastest response time. When in doubt, check it out by calling, texting, or chatting - Prevention is truly the best possible medicine. Follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/njpies) and Twitter ([@NJPoisonCenter](https://twitter.com/NJPoisonCenter)) for breaking news, safety tips, trivia questions, etc. BE POISON SMART! Share poison prevention tips with your family (including children), friends, and coworkers.

Real People. Real Answers.

About NJPIES

As New Jersey's only poison control center, the New Jersey Poison Information & Education System provides information on poison prevention and treatments. Chartered in 1983, NJPIES provides free consultation through telephone hot line services and the Web. Medical professionals such as physicians, registered nurses and pharmacists offer confidential advice regarding poison emergencies and provide information on poison prevention, drugs, food poisoning, animal bites and more. These specialists are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

NJPIES coordinates state poison education and research and is designated as the regional poison center by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and the American Association of Poison Control Centers. It tracks incidences of adverse reactions to food, drugs and vaccines in order to monitor potential public health issues and provide data to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A division of the Department of Preventive Medicine and Community Health of the New Jersey Medical School of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, NJPIES has a state-of-the-art center located on the school's Newark campus.

New Jersey residents seeking immediate information about treating poison emergencies, and those with any drug information questions, should call the toll-free hot line, **800-222-1222**, any time. The hearing impaired may call **973-926-8008**. For more information, visit www.njpies.org or call **973-972-9280**.

About Rutgers

Established in 1766, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is America's eighth oldest institution of higher learning and one of the nation's premier public research universities. Serving more than 65,000 students on campuses, centers, institutes and other locations throughout the state, Rutgers is the only public university in New Jersey that is a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities.

Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) is the health care education, research, and clinical division of Rutgers University, comprising nine schools and their attendant faculty practices, centers, institutes and clinics; New Jersey's leading comprehensive cancer care center; and New Jersey's largest behavioral health care network.

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