



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

NEWS RELEASE

Media Contacts:

800-222-1222 (800-962-1253 outside NJ)

NJ Poison Experts Remind Residents That Poisonings Span a Lifetime

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) – March 20, 2013– The NJ Poison Experts remind residents that poisonings can happen at any time to anyone of any age, according to Steven Marcus, MD, executive and medical director of the NJ Poison Center.

“National Poison Prevention Week is the perfect time to highlight the fact that poisonings can happen to anyone and poison prevention is for everyone, from children to seniors and everyone in between,” Marcus said. “Poisonings span a lifetime.”

Since 1962, the third week in March has been designated National Poison Prevention Week and has focused national attention on the dangers of poisonings and how to prevent them. America’s 57 poison centers are committed to safeguarding the health and well-being of every American through poison prevention and free, confidential, expert medical services. Poison centers respond to calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week in order to help those who have been exposed to toxic substances.

In 2011, U.S. poison centers fielded more than 3.6 million calls, including about 2.3 million cases of human exposures to poisons. Parents and babysitters call poison centers when young children get into a toxic substance. Seniors call poison centers when they fear they may have made an error in taking their medicines. And doctors, nurses, pharmacists and emergency room staff call their local poison centers for treatment advice on drug- or poison-related cases.

“Most calls to poison centers are about children, but most people who die from poisons are adults,” Marcus said. “A poison is any substance that can harm someone if it is used in the wrong way, by the wrong person or in the wrong amount. Poisoning is a danger for all of us.”

The experts offer the following tips to help you prevent poisonings:

- Keep medicines and cleaning supplies locked up and away from children. Children act fast. Unfortunately, so do poisons.
- Always put on your glasses to read your prescription bottle, and only give or take medicine with the lights on.
- Ask visitors to keep purses and luggage containing medicine out of the reach of children at all times.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors and check batteries at least twice a year.
- Keep the 1-800-222-1222 Poison Help number accessible and program it into your cell phone. Call FAST to treat a poisoning. Call FIRST to prevent a poisoning.

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 poison center at 800-222-1222. Doing online research and learning about medical conditions is a new sign of the times and a must-do for a savvy patient. But savvy patients need to know when it’s important to put down the smartphone and dial an

emergency number to get help. They NJ Poison Experts are always here to help with emergencies or questions involving medicines, chemicals or household products, etc. Help is available in over 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 - Prevention is truly the best possible medicine. Remember, Help is Just a Phone Call Away!

Real People. Real Answers.

Follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/njpies) and Twitter ([@NJPoisonCenter](https://twitter.com/NJPoisonCenter)) to be poison smart. Be a poison prevention superhero - share poison prevention tips with your family (including children), friends, and coworkers.

Call to Action – Help is Just a Phone Call Away

NJPIES leaders urge medical professionals, parents, educators, caregivers and the general public to call the toll-free poison center hot line, 800-222-1222, with any poison related question as well as for non-emergency questions regarding medications, household products, plants, environmental contaminants, or other poisons. The hotline is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You may also chat or text in using our website, www.njpies.org. **Real People. Real Answers.**

The NJ poison experts recommend putting the number in all family cell phones as well as programming it as a speed dial number on landlines (home and office). In addition, prominently post the number near all phones in the home and office.

Follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/njpies) and Twitter ([@NJPoisonCenter](https://twitter.com/NJPoisonCenter)) for breaking news, safety tips, trivia questions, etc.

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 the University of Medicine and Dentistry 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 UMDNJ

The University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) is New Jersey's only health sciences university with more than 6,000 students on five campuses attending three medical schools, the State's only dental school, a graduate school of biomedical sciences, a school of health related professions, a school of nursing and New Jersey's only school of public health. UMDNJ operates University Hospital, a Level I Trauma Center in Newark, and University Behavioral HealthCare, which provides a continuum of healthcare services with multiple locations throughout the State.

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