

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

## ***MEDIA ALERT***

Media Contacts:

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

Binge Drinking Craze  
-- NekNomination is a Growing Concern for Poison Experts --

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) – February 17, 2014 —According to recent reports, a dangerous drinking game has gone viral on the Net, placing many at risk for serious injuries related to excessive alcohol use. Played via social media sites like Youtube, the concept is to essentially consume a large quantity of alcohol, engage in some type of dangerous activity, followed by daring other peers to follow suit by doing something even more dangerous while under the influence – all while being filmed and then posted online.

This craze brings to light the seriousness of binge drinking (chugging), defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as meaning men drinking 5 or more alcoholic drinks within a short period of time or women drinking 4 or more drinks within a short period of time. New CDC data reports that more than 38 million US adults binge drink, about 4 times a month, and the largest number of drinks per binge is 8. This behavior greatly increases the chances of getting hurt or hurting others due to car crashes, violence, and suicide.

The NJ Poison Experts are concerned for the safety of those participating in such dangerous games. The chance of getting sick and dying from alcohol related health problems increases significantly for those who binge drink. For many, the main goal of drinking is intoxication, but that often brings with it unforeseen dangers both immediate and long term including

- Unintentional injuries (e.g., car crashes, falls, burns, drowning)
- Intentional injuries (e.g., firearm injuries, sexual assault, domestic violence)
- Alcohol poisoning
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases/Infections (STD/STI)
- Unintended pregnancy
- Children born with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders
- High blood pressure, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases
- Liver disease
- Neurological damage
- Sexual dysfunction
- Poor control of diabetes
- Miscarriages and stillbirths among pregnant women

"Drinking too much, too fast can essentially kill you," said Steven Marcus, MD, executive and medical director of the NJ Poison Center. "Keep in mind that alcohol is a depressant, which means it can slow your breathing, heart rate, and decrease blood pressure especially if blood alcohol levels rise sharply in a short time period. When this happens, people lose consciousness and can die. Alcohol poisoned individuals also increase their risk of dying by choking on their own vomit."

If someone is unconscious, not breathing, seizing/convulsing, bleeding profusely, difficult to arouse/wake up, etc. call 911 immediately, otherwise call the **NJ Poison Experts at (1-800-222-1222)**. "Don't waste valuable time looking up information on

the Internet when every minute counts. Many of the calls we get are genuine emergencies," said Dr. Steven Marcus. "Having a poison expert give you exact instructions for your specific situation can help significantly during those critical first few minutes."

### **Help is Just a Phone Call Away!**

Remember, calls are free and confidential and help is always available 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year, even during bouts of Mother Nature. Call 800-222-1222 to speak with a NJ Poison Expert. Help is available in more than 150 languages.

We are social. Join us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/njpies](http://www.facebook.com/njpies)) and Twitter ([@NJPoisonCenter](https://twitter.com/NJPoisonCenter)) for breaking news, safety tips, trivia questions, etc. Share what you learn with your family (including children), friends, and coworkers.

### **Real People. Real Answers.**

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#### **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. NJPIES is funded, in part, by the NJ Department of Health and the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

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](http://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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