

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

## ***MEDIA ALERT***

Media Contacts:

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

### **Take a Stand against Rx Drug Abuse – Prevent Unintentional Poisonings – April 30<sup>th</sup> 2016**

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New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES)

*Available for Interview*

**(Newark, NJ) – April 25, 2016** — Make a difference in your community on April 30, 2016. Join local New Jersey law enforcement agencies for another statewide prescription take back event on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup> from 10AM to 2PM. This nationwide initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue both in New Jersey and across the country - the soaring epidemic of prescription (Rx) drug abuse.

Medicines (prescription, over-the-counter, dietary/herbals supplements, etc.) that are not needed and remain in homes are highly susceptible to being stolen, misused, and abused. Prescription pain relievers (opioids/pain pills) used to treat chronic pain often lead to physical dependence and addiction. Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. are alarmingly high, as are the number of unintentional poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs.

This one-day event will allow you to drop off any unwanted, unused or expired medications for safe disposal. This event is free of charge and drop-offs will be strictly anonymous. Many times those that abuse prescription medications obtain them from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet.

We urge everyone to use a lockable medicine cabinet or any other lockable container to keep all medications, both prescription and over the counter, locked up at all times in their home. This will help prevent both an unintentional exposure of a young child and access by those seeking the medication for other than the intended purpose.

Mark your calendars and commit to dropping off your unneeded or expired medications. This is a great opportunity for those who may have missed the previous events or who have accumulated more unwanted, unused medications, since the last take back event in September 2015. Your participation in this event will help keep dangerous, addictive medications off of the streets as well as help to ensure that these medicines are disposed of safely.

Contact the New Jersey Poison Experts at 1-800-222-1222 for a participating site near you; remember to tell the seniors in your lives to do the same. If you are unable to attend the April 30<sup>th</sup> event, you may take your medication to one of the permanent RX drop-off boxes located in many NJ communities. Call us to assist you in finding a permanent site in your area.

In the event of an exposure, don't waste valuable time looking up information on the Internet when every minute counts. If someone has collapsed, stopped breathing, or convulsing/seizing call 911 immediately, otherwise call the NJ Poison Experts at (1-800-222-1222). Experts are always here to help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year. Calls are free and confidential. Help is available in more than 150 languages.

Time is of the essence in many situations since poisons and medicines may act very quickly. Having a poison expert give you exact instructions for your specific situation can help significantly during those critical first few minutes. Program the Poison Help line (800-222-1222) into your cell phone and post it near your home and office phones too

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

We are social. Join us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/njpies](http://www.facebook.com/njpies)) and Twitter (@NJPoisonCenter) for breaking news, safety tips, trivia questions, etc. Stay tuned for more poison prevention week safety information.

### **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 Emergency Medicine 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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