

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

## ***MEDIA ALERT***

Media Contacts:

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

### **Prevent a Trip to the ER 4<sup>th</sup> of July Weekend 10 Summer Safety Tips**

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*Available for Interviews*

**(Newark, NJ) – June 2017** — Summer holidays should be spent outdoors enjoying the sunshine and warm weather not inside the emergency department (ED/ER) of your local hospital. The majority of poisoning exposures/injuries occur at home and are preventable! Injuries from common household items do not just happen to children, they happen to all including pets.

“Safety is no an accident, it’s a choice,” says Dr. Diane Calello, Medical Director of the NJ Poison Center, Rutgers NJ Medical School. “As your family prepares for the weekend, I want you to be proactive by remembering these 10 safety tips.”

#### 10 Summer Safety Reminders

- Use caution in the sun because some medications can greatly increase the chance for severe sunburn even when using sunscreen.
- Do not cross-contaminate! Cooked foods should not be placed on plates or in containers that previously held raw meat, poultry, fish, or seafood without washing them with soap and water first.
- Carbon monoxide poisoning happens in the summer too. Never use a grill indoors, in a garage, shed, camper, tent, etc. Swim and play away from boat engines.
- Use EPA registered insect repellent (DEET at least 20% or more) to prevent the spread of disease from mosquitoes and ticks (Zika, Lymes, and West Nile). [bit.ly/2qslUwW](http://bit.ly/2qslUwW)
- When friends and family visit, **lock up** all of their medications (prescription, over-the-counter, dietary, herbal). Children, teens and pets die every year because medicines are easily accessible.
- Store charcoal lighter fluid and lamp/torch oil in locked cabinets, away from food and drink and out of sight and reach of children and pets. Swallowing these products can lead to serious poisoning and even death.
- Use caution with alcoholic beverages since the alcohol may interact with medications.
- Do not pick plants/mushrooms to eat from your backyard or fields. Many people suffer serious health effects and even die each year from mushroom poisoning.
- When giving/taking medicine, use a dosing device (syringe or cup) not a household spoon meant for eating. Using a household spoon increases the risk for overdose.
- Clean up right after parties. Cigarette butts, alcohol and liquid nicotine can be dangerous to both children and pets.

"Remember, we are here to help you even during holidays so save our number in your phone, 1-800-222-1222," says Dr. Calello. "If you believe your child, pet, or anyone else may have ingested something harmful, call us right away for expert help." If someone is unconscious, not breathing, seizing/convulsing, bleeding profusely, difficult to arouse/wake up, etc. call 9-1-1.

### **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.

### **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 Poison Help line, **1-800-222-1222**, any time. For more information, visit [www.njpies.org](http://www.njpies.org) or call **Poison Help**.

#### **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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