

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

NEWS RELEASE

Media to contact:
800-222-1222
800-962-1253 if outside NJ

For Immediate Release
July 30, 2018

Potential Dangers by the Pool

(Newark, NJ) – Sunburn, unsafe swimming and sweltering temperatures are not the only concerns when heading to the pool on a bright summer day. Exposure to pool chemicals pose potentially serious health concerns. Poison center experts often see an uptick in calls involving both children and adults during the swimming season.

CASE: Caller in his 30's developed coughing and shortness of breath after routine pool maintenance. Symptoms developed after opening pool chemical containers in his shed, which had poor ventilation.

CASE: Caller stated siblings younger than 10 years old were playing out in their backyard. A pool chemical container was left on the patio, in the sun with the lid unsecured. Children developed breathing problems after opening the lid and inhaling the chemical's fumes.

"Pool safety includes safe handling of pool chemicals," says Diane Calello, MD, [NJ Poison Control Center Executive and Medical Director](#), [Rutgers NJ Medical School's Department of Emergency Medicine](#). "Some pool and hot tub chemicals, which are necessary to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria in the water, can be dangerous and must be used and stored properly. For example, chlorine can cause eye irritation, breathing problems and lung injury if used in high concentrations or in poorly ventilated enclosed spaces."

The NJ Poison Control Center offers the following tips for the safe handling and storage of swimming pool and hot tub chemicals:

- Store chemicals in a lockable area out of sight and reach of children and pets. Keep them in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area out of the sun.
- Read and follow the safety directions on the product's label during each use. Always keep chlorine and other chemicals in their original containers to avoid confusion and possible accidental ingestion.
- Never mix chemicals together; the combination could create a toxic gas which could have life-threatening effects. This risk also applies to mixing chemicals with ammonia.
- Chlorine should never be ingested. Avoid shaking chlorine containers to minimize dust, fumes and splashes. Avoid touching chlorine with bare hands.
- Open all chemicals in well-ventilated areas, preferably outdoors. Keep chlorine away from other combustible substances.
- When transporting chemicals, separate incompatible chemicals and tightly secure them to prevent spills.

- Be aware that swimming in chlorinated water can have the following effects: skin irritation that can trigger rashes; burning, itchy eyes; and can trigger or aggravate bronchial problems including asthma.
- Save the Poison Help line, 1-800-222-1222, in your phone for questions, concerns and emergencies.

Poison Control Centers are not only a great resource in the event of an emergency, but experts are also available to answer any questions or concerns you may have, 24/7. Save the Poison Help line, 1-800-222-1222, in your phone today so you're prepared for what may happen tomorrow.

Help is Just a Phone Call Away!

We are social. Join us on Facebook ([@NJPIES](#)) and Twitter ([@NJPoisonCenter](#)) for breaking news, safety tips, trivia questions, etc.

Real People. Real Answers.

Available for Media Interviews

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About NJPIES

Chartered in 1983, the New Jersey Poison Information & Education System (NJPIES) is New Jersey's only poison control center. Medical professionals such as physicians, registered nurses and pharmacists offer free consultation through hotline services (telephone, text and chat) regarding poison emergencies and provide information on poison prevention, drugs, food poisoning, animal bites and more. In addition, it tracks incidences of adverse reactions to food, drugs and vaccines in order to monitor potential public health issues and provide data to the New Jersey Department of Health, U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. NJPIES' confidential services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year. When needed, NJPIES responds to other emergent health issues by expanding hotline services.

NJPIES is designated as the state's regional poison control center by the New Jersey Department of Health and the American Association of Poison Control Centers. It is a division of the Department of Emergency Medicine of Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. NJPIES has a state-of-the-art center located at Rutgers Health Sciences in Newark. NJPIES is funded, in part, by the NJ Department of Health, NJ Hospitals and the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

New Jersey residents should save the Poison Help number, 1-800-222-1222, in their mobile phones and post the number somewhere visible in their home. NJPIES is also available via text [8002221222@njpies.org](tel:8002221222) and chat www.njpies.org.
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About Rutgers

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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.