

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  
September 4, 2018

### Health Experts Warn Frozen Dessert is Causing Adverse Effects

- Liquid Nitrogen in “Dragon’s Breath” Snack causing burns and breathing problems -

**(Newark, NJ) – Warning. A popular snack is causing health concern in the medical community for its potential to cause serious injury to the mouth, throat/ esophagus and stomach if ingested. New Jersey Poison Control Experts recommend avoiding any product infused with liquid nitrogen at the point of sale, including “Dragon’s Breath”, until more information is available.**

Marketed under names like “Dragon’s Breath”, “Heaven’s Breath” and “Nitro Puff”, these snacks are made when extremely cold liquid nitrogen is added to cereal or cheese puffs for the desired effect of breathing out smoke/vapor through the mouth and nose, resembling that of a dragon. Vapor is released when the cold liquid nitrogen mixes with the warmth inside the mouth. Liquid nitrogen is used in many frozen drinks and food products, including ice cream, but it evaporates and allows the food to come up to a safe temperature before consumption. When added at the point of sale, any leftover liquid nitrogen, or the extremely low temperature it produces, can lead to an injury similar to frostbite – but in the mouth and other internal organs.

“Swallowing liquid nitrogen can be life-threatening,” says Diane Calello, MD, [NJ Poison Control Center](#) Executive and Medical Director, [Rutgers NJ Medical School’s Department of Emergency Medicine](#). “The NJ Poison Control Center has been consulted for several liquid nitrogen exposure cases here in New Jersey.” In one incident, a teen drank a bit of liquid nitrogen while experimenting with making ice cream. This resulted in serious health outcomes and caused long-term damage to his esophagus and stomach. “Our most recent case involved a female who required evaluation in a hospital emergency room after ingesting two Dragon’s Breath puffs. This patient experienced what she described as severe acid reflux.”

Other patients have experienced breathing problems and asthma-like symptoms. According to Bruce Ruck, Managing Director of the NJ Poison Control Center, risk doesn’t just come with swallowing products like Dragon’s Breath. Consumers must be extremely careful when handling products dipped in liquid nitrogen due to the potential for burns and damage to the skin.

“We are alerting the public today of the serious health hazards posed by these products in the hopes that we can prevent further injury,” says Calello. “Avoid products where liquid nitrogen is added at the point of sale, it is not worth the risk.” The US Food and Drug Administration has also just released a safety alert in response to these concerns.

In the event you or someone else is exposed to liquid nitrogen, call the [NJ Poison Control Center](#) to get the medical help or information you need right away. Call, text, or chat with a health professional for

free, 24/7. Save the Poison Help line, 1-800-222-1222, in your phone today so you're prepared for what may happen tomorrow, ([www.njpies.org](http://www.njpies.org)).

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

Stay Connected: Facebook ([@NJPIES](https://www.facebook.com/NJPIES)) and Twitter ([@NJPoisonCenter](https://twitter.com/NJPoisonCenter)) for breaking news, safety tips, trivia questions, etc.

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

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U.S. Food and Drug Administration, "FDA Advises Consumers to Avoid Eating, Drinking, or Handling Food Products Prepared with Liquid Nitrogen at the Point of Sale," August 30, 2018

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#### **Available for Media Interviews**

Diane P. Calello, MD, Executive and Medical Director, New Jersey Poison Control Center, Rutgers NJ Medical School's Department of Emergency Medicine

Bruce Ruck, Pharm.D., Managing Director, New Jersey Poison Control Center, Rutgers NJ Medical School's Department of Emergency Medicine

#### **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](text:8002221222@njpies.org) and chat [www.njpies.org](http://www.njpies.org). Stay Connected: [FB](#) / [Twitter](#) / [Website](#)

#### **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.