

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

When Poison Happens, We're Here for You

NJ Poison Control Center Celebrates National Poison Prevention Week 2023

(New Jersey) – The New Jersey Poison Control Center and poison control centers around the country are celebrating National Poison Prevention Week (NPPW), observed this year on March 19-25th. This week is dedicated to promoting the importance of recognizing accidental poisoning risks, preventing injuries and raising awareness about the life-saving services the nation's network of 55 poison control centers provide to callers on the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222.

"When life happens, calling your local poison control center for help can make a difference between a mild health effect and a serious one," says Bruce Ruck, managing director of the [New Jersey Poison Control Center](#) at [Rutgers New Jersey Medical School](#).

"Our medical staff's expertise and fast response provides callers with the medical help they need, right at home," says Ruck. "Most callers never need to go to the emergency room or spend money on medical costs." Guessing whether a concern is a medical emergency, waiting for symptoms to appear, or wasting time searching for medical information online can delay medical treatment and lead to more severe health effects.

In celebrating this important injury prevention week, the NJ Poison Control Center together with Children's Specialized Hospital (CSH) invite the public to attend the [2023 National Poison Prevention Week Health and Safety Resource Fair](#) on Saturday, March 25th from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the [Middlesex County Fire Academy](#) in Sayreville, NJ. Through this event, attendees will learn safety practices to prevent accidental poisoning and the importance of contacting the NJ Poison Control Center if someone has come into contact with a potentially dangerous product or substance.

The state's poison control center and CSH recognize that everyone should have access to information and resources to be healthy and safe. The event is inclusive of specific health and safety needs of people with disabilities and special health needs. See event details [here](#).

Community agencies and organizations interested in tabling at the 2023 National Poison Prevention Week Health and Safety Resource Fair can [register here](#).

The Poison Help line is available anywhere in the U.S. and directly connects callers to their local poison control center. Toxicology specialists including nurses, pharmacists and physicians provide callers with free, private/confidential, medical advice, 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Although you may not have a questions or emergency now, save the Poison Help line (1-800-222-1222) as an emergency contact in your phone for a future concern — you just may save a life.

“When people first think of a poison control center, they may believe our services only apply to little ones who get into cleaners under the sink or older adults who mix up their medicines,” says Ruck. “In fact, our poison control center helps callers of all ages, in many languages, and for all types of poisoning exposures every day.”

Accidents and mishaps often involve common products and substances found in our everyday environments besides medicines and chemicals. Other risks include, recreational drugs (cannabis/marijuana edibles, vape liquids, and alcohol), food poisoning, bites and stings, carbon monoxide, medicine/substance overdose, toxic plants, and foreign bodies (coins, magnets, and batteries).

Along with helping the public, poison control center staff regularly consult with medical and emergency service providers in hospital emergency departments and healthcare facilities across the state to assist in the diagnosis and treatment of patients. Studies show patients hospitalized after a poisoning exposure with poison control center assistance spend fewer days in the hospital than patients hospitalized without poison control center assistance.

As National Poison Prevention Week nears, help the NJ Poison Control Center promote poison safety education. [Click here](#) for sharable resources. There’s something for everyone! Follow along on social media using #NPPW23. Stay connected on social: [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#) [TikTok](#)

The poison control center’s education department is available to provide poison safety programs, prevention education materials, and attend community events. [Submit requests here](#) for community programs and education materials.

If you think someone has come in contact with something dangerous, contact your local poison control center immediately for medical treatment advice. Anyone can call for medical help – children, teens and adults. Poison control centers are a medical resource for both the public and healthcare providers. Get help 24/7.

If the person is awake, call the NJ Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222 or [Chat Here](#)

If someone is not breathing, hard to wake up, or having a seizure, call 9-1-1



(Clickable)

Available for Media Interviews

Diane 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

Lewis S. Nelson, MD, Professor and Chair of Emergency Medicine, Rutgers NJ Medical School

About New Jersey Poison Control Center / NJPIES, 1-800-222-1222

Chartered in 1983, the New Jersey Poison Information & Education System (NJPIES), known to the public as the New Jersey Poison Control Center, is the state's primary defense against injury and deaths from intentional and unintentional poisonings. It 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 at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. NJPIES has a state-of-the-art center located at Rutgers Biomedical and 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.

Hotline staff (physicians, registered nurses, and pharmacists) provide free, telemedicine consultation through hotline services (telephone, text, chat) regarding poison emergencies and provide information on poison prevention practices, drug interactions and overdoses, food poisoning, environmental chemical exposures, animal/insect bites and stings, plant and other outdoor exposures, carbon monoxide and lead poisonings, and more. NJPIES' services are free, confidential/private, available 24/7, and help is available in any language. Call 1-800-222-1222 or [Chat Here](#).

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About Rutgers New Jersey Medical School

Founded in 1954, Rutgers New Jersey Medical School is the oldest school of medicine in the state. Today it is part of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and graduates approximately 170 physicians a year. In addition to providing the MD degree, the school offers MD/PhD, MD/MPH and MD/MBA degrees through collaborations with other institutions of higher education. Dedicated to excellence in education, research, clinical care and community outreach, the medical school comprises 20 academic departments and works with several healthcare partners, including its principal teaching hospital, University Hospital. Its faculty consists of numerous world-renowned scientists and many of the region's "top doctors." Home to the nation's oldest student-run clinic, New Jersey Medical School hosts more than 50 centers and institutes, including the Public Health Research Institute Center, the Global Tuberculosis Institute and the Neurological Institute of New Jersey. For more information please visit: njms.rutgers.edu.

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