

The New Jersey Poison Control Center — Serving New Jersey Since 1983

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

When the Unexpected Happens, We're Here for You

National Poison Prevention Week 2024

(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 17-23rd. 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 people of all ages through the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222.

"National Poison Prevention Week serves as a reminder that prevention is our strongest antidote," says Bruce Ruck, managing director of the [New Jersey Poison Control Center](http://NJPoisonCenter.org) at [Rutgers New Jersey Medical School](http://RutgersNJMS.edu). "Preventing potentially dangerous mishaps from occurring is an important step in protecting the wellbeing of loved ones."

Accidents and mishaps often involve common products and substances found in our everyday environments besides medicines and household 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).

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. "When the unexpected happens and you're unsure about potential dangers, call the New Jersey Poison Control Center for credible, poison information, advice, and treatment recommendations," says Ruck. The expertise and guidance provided by the center's medical providers help quickly address emergencies, giving the caller peace of mind. Most callers never need to go to the emergency room or spend money on medical costs.

The Poison Help line is available anywhere in the U.S. and directly connects people 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. A translation service is available at no cost to callers who speak languages other than English.

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.

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.

Help the New Jersey Poison Control Center promote poison safety education. [Click here](#) for sharable resources and follow #NPPW24 on social media for safety tips and information. 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 free education materials.

If you think someone came in contact with something dangerous, contact the New Jersey Poison Control Center immediately for medical treatment advice. Anyone can call for help – children, teens, and adults. Poison control centers are a medical resource for both the public and healthcare professionals. Get help 24/7 — Call 1-800-222-1222 or [Chat Here](#). If someone is not breathing, hard to wake up, or having a seizure, call 9-1-1.

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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 Health 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](#).

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.