

HOW TO PREVENT POISONING

How poisonings can occur

- ⊕ The risk of poisoning increases when usual household routines are disrupted, for example when moving house, going on holiday, having visitors or during household illnesses.
- ⊕ Many poisonings occur when a product or medicine is not in its usual storage location. For example; when in use and left on a bench top, pool side or bedside table, or during transport from the shop to home.
- ⊕ Take extra care to supervise children when visiting. Other households and businesses may not have medicines or other poisons stored safely.

Storage

- ⊕ Store all medicines and chemicals out of reach and out of sight of children (at least 1.5m high), in a locked or child resistant cupboard.
- ⊕ Safe storage may be needed in the kitchen, laundry, bathroom and garage/shed.
- ⊕ Always separate medicines from household products.
- ⊕ Keep poisons in their original containers. Never transfer poisons to drink or food containers.
- ⊕ Ask for, and use, household products and medicines in child resistant packaging. Check that the child resistant closure is working correctly. You may need to clean around the neck of the container.
- ⊕ Do not leave medicines, such as the contraceptive pill, on your bedside table.
- ⊕ Do not leave any medicines or chemicals unattended. Many poisonings occur while a product is in use and left within reach of a child.
- ⊕ Place empty containers from liquid medications or household products into the wheelie bin immediately as many poisonings occur when children access 'empty' containers from the kitchen rubbish bin.

Medicines

- ⊕ Always take medicines in a well lit room. Wear your glasses.
- ⊕ Read and follow the directions for use carefully and accurately.
- ⊕ Children tend to imitate adults, so avoid taking medicines in their presence.
- ⊕ Refer to medicines by their proper names. They are not lollies.
- ⊕ Visitors' bags may contain medicines. Keep them well out of reach of children.
- ⊕ Keep medicines that require refrigeration in a tightly closed or locked container at the back of the fridge.
- ⊕ Do not take other people's medicines.
- ⊕ Clean out your medicine cupboard regularly. Take unwanted or out-of-date medicines to your nearest pharmacy for disposal.

Other household poisoning threats

- ⊕ Protect yourself from strong chemicals. Read and follow the instructions especially when painting, cleaning the swimming pool, spraying or oven cleaning. Protect your skin and eyes. Ensure there is good air circulation. Remove any contaminated clothing immediately.
- ⊕ Make yourself familiar with the plants in your garden and restrict access to known poisonous plants. Look out for mushrooms and other fungi, especially after rain. If someone is exposed to a poisonous plant, follow the advice in this leaflet.

More information

- ⊕ For more detailed poisoning advice visit the Queensland Poisons Information Centre's website at: <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/PoisonsInformationCentre/>
- ⊕ Child safety at home is an important issue for all Queensland families. Visit: <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/chipp/documents/32461.pdf> and download your copy of the *Home Safety Checklist*.

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Preventing poisoning - tips and advice



For poisoning advice call **13 11 26**
24 hours a day, anywhere in Australia

WHEN SHOULD YOU RING THE POISONS INFORMATION CENTRE?

Ring if you, or someone in your care, may have been poisoned. Always check if you are not sure.

Do not wait for symptoms to occur.

Poisons can include:

- ⊕ prescription medicines
- ⊕ over the counter medicines like iron tablets and paracetamol
- ⊕ natural or alternate remedies including homeopathic or herbal medicines and vitamins
- ⊕ cleaning and laundry products, including dishwasher detergents, drain cleaners and bleaches
- ⊕ essential oils like eucalyptus and tea tree oil
- ⊕ kerosene, mineral turpentine
- ⊕ perfumes and aftershaves
- ⊕ tobacco, cigarettes, cigarette butts
- ⊕ car products, petrol
- ⊕ pesticides, weed killers
- ⊕ paints
- ⊕ some plants and mushrooms
- ⊕ bites or stings by spiders, snakes, insects, marine creatures or other animals.

WHY RING THE POISONS INFORMATION CENTRE?

- ⊕ For First Aid advice and to find out whether medical attention is needed
- ⊕ For poisoning prevention information
- ⊕ To find out more about the risks associated with chemicals, cleaners, plants, pesticides and other products.

CALL 13 11 26

FIRST AID FOR POISONING

If the person has collapsed or is not breathing, ring **000** for an ambulance. Only ring the Poisons Information Centre for information once the ambulance is on the way.

Swallowed poison

- ⊕ Do not try to make the person vomit.
- ⊕ Wipe or rinse the mouth and face.
- ⊕ Pick up the container or plant sample (if safe to do so) and take it to the telephone. Note the product name and any active ingredients.
- ⊕ **Call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26.**

Poison on the skin

- ⊕ Remove contaminated clothing, taking care to avoid contact with the poison.

- ⊕ Flood the skin with cool running water.
- ⊕ Wash gently with soap and water and rinse well.
- ⊕ Pick up the container or plant sample (if safe to do so) and take it to the telephone. Note the product name and any active ingredients.
- ⊕ **Call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26.**

Poison in the eye

- ⊕ Gently flood the eye with water from a cup, jug or slowly running tap. Continue for 10-15 minutes, holding the eyelids open.
- ⊕ Pick up the container or plant sample (if safe to do so) and take it to the telephone. Note the product name and any active ingredients.
- ⊕ **Call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26.**

Inhaled poison

- ⊕ Get the person to fresh air quickly without placing yourself at risk. Avoid breathing any fumes.
- ⊕ Open doors and windows wide, if safe to do so.
- ⊕ Pick up the container (if safe to do so) and take it to the telephone. Note the product name and any active ingredients.
- ⊕ **Call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26.**

