

- Poisons come in all shapes and colors.
- Many products that seem harmless can become poisons when used incorrectly.

Children are attracted to pretty colors and like to use the things that adults use. Toddlers are especially at risk because they love to explore and put what they find in their mouths. They will even eat things that smell and taste bad.

Common household items that can hurt children include:

- Cleaning products: soaps, detergents, disinfectants, deodorizers, bleach, furniture polish
- Health and beauty products: Cosmetics, hairspray, polish remover, astringents
- Medicines: All over-the-counter and prescription medicines and vitamins
- Household plants
- Paints, stains, and paint removing or thinning products
- Gasoline, antifreeze, and motor oil
- Pesticides (bug and weed killers)
- Outdoor plants, shrubs, and berries

Poison prevention tips

Follow as many of these tips as possible to make your home safer. Even if you don't have children, be prepared for visits from neighbor kids and grandchildren.

- Buy products with child resistant packaging and child resistant caps.
- Use safety closures on all cabinets holding medicines and chemicals. A high cupboard may not be enough to keep your child safe. Children are very resourceful and can use a chair or table as a ladder.
- Keep all medicines in their original containers. Don't put them into other bottles or mix them together.

It's best to avoid removing medicine from a cabinet and taking it in front of a child. Children will do what they see you do.

- Children think of sweets and candy as good things, so don't use those words to describe medicine or vitamins.
- Store medicines and cleaning agents in areas that are away from food. Keep products that are meant to be swallowed away from those that should never be swallowed.
- Put medicine away as soon as you give it to your child. If you leave medicine next to a child's bed, the child might try to please you by finishing it all.

- If you have house plants, keep them where a child cannot reach them. Many house plants are poisonous if chewed or swallowed.
- If you are called away while using cleaning products, take them with you. Don't leave them on the counter.

If a child is poisoned, stay calm and act quickly

Get the poison away from the child. If the substance is still in the child's mouth, remove it with your fingers or make the child spit it out.

Call the Poison Control Center:

- Nationwide toll-free: 1-800-222-1222
 - TDD toll-free (Washington state only): 1-800-572-0638
 - Idaho TDD line: 1-303-739-1127
- Provide as much information as you can about:
- What the child swallowed. Take the bottle or container with you to the telephone.
 - How much was swallowed.
 - How long ago the poison was swallowed.
 - The child's age, weight, medical conditions, and medications they may be taking.
 - How to contact you, including your name, telephone number, and address.

Is your home poison proof?

Take our home safety quiz to see how you rate in poison prevention. Each question checked is worth one point.

- No cleaning products under the sink?
- House plants up high, out of reach?
- Drain cleaners and furniture polishes out of reach?
- Food and cleaning products kept separately?
- Medicines stored in a safe place?
- Old and expired medicines discarded regularly?
- All safety closures secured properly?
- Always read labels before using?
- Bathroom counter free of harmful products?
- No beauty supplies on window sill or ledges?
- All perfumes and cosmetics out of reach?
- No flaking paint chips on window sills or woodwork?
- No flaking paint chips on crib or playpen?
- Medicines kept off dressers and bedside tables?
- Soaps, detergents, and cleaners up high!
- Disinfectants and deodorizers on high shelf?
- Bug sprays and pesticides used correctly?

Poison Prevention & Treatment:

A guide for keeping your family safe

Score

19–20 Excellent, stay alert

16–18 Good, but you can do more

10–15 Poor, asking for trouble

0–9 Danger zone!

Resources: Where can I get more information?

- Common household items that can hurt children
 - The **Consulting Nurse Service** is available to Kaiser Permanente members with medical questions or concerns. Call 24 hours a day, toll-free 1-800-297-6877.
 - The **Kaiser Permanente Resource Line** has information on a variety of safety topics about keeping your child safe at home, in the car, and at play. Call weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. toll-free 1-800-992-2279.
 - Visit Health and Wellness Resources on the **Kaiser Permanente website** at kp.org/wa.
- The information presented in this pamphlet is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of professional medical care.