

Poison Prevention

National Poison Prevention Week is observed every March. Now is a good time to double check your home and make sure your family is safe from poisons.

Bathroom

- If young children live in your home, use a medicine cabinet with a child-proof latch and keep it secured, even if the cabinet is raised.
- Use child-resistant caps on medications and keep them tightly closed.
- Never take medication in front of a child or refer to pills as candy.
- Check the label of your mouthwash for alcohol content; some mouthwashes contain enough to poison small children.
- Always follow a medication's recommended dosage.
- Check expiration dates on unused over-the-counter and prescription medications. Safely dispose of those that are out of date.
- Use and store cleansers with caution; some are dangerously caustic and capable of burning tissue if ingested.

Bedroom

- Keep personal care items such as hair spray, cologne, perfumes, nail polish remover and astringents closed when not in use, and away from children.

Living Room

- Stow your visitors' coats and purses away from children who might discover medications while curiously hunting through them.
- Ensure a lead-safe home.

Kitchen

- Check under your sink and in other cabinets for stored products that could be hazardous, such as bleaching agents, rust removers, drain cleaners, ammonia, oven cleaners, detergents, furniture polish, floor wax, metal polish, wax remover, and wall/floor/toilet bowl cleaners. Even food extracts, such as vanilla and almond, are potential poisons.



- If products cannot be moved, install safety latches on cupboard doors.
- Avoid storing cleaning compounds and foods together.
- Keep all substances in their original containers, with labels intact for important usage and safety information.

Especially for Older Adults

- Request medicine labels printed in larger type.
- If a child-restraint cap is difficult to use, ask your pharmacist for an alternative.
- To ensure you are taking the medicine you intended, turn on the lights and double-check the label, especially if you are sleepy or sick.
- Avoid dosage errors by using dosage containers that indicate the day of the week and/or time of day. Don't leave it to memory.
- If you are taking two or more prescriptions or over-the-counter medications, ask your pharmacist about drug interactions.

Poisoning and Pets

- Avoid feeding pets human food. Chocolate, for instance, can poison and kill a dog.

- Don't spray or store cleaning or pesticide products near pet food or water dishes. In the event of a spill, keep animals out of the area until it is clean.
- Because poisonous anti-freeze tastes sweet to dogs and cats, store these products carefully and immediately clean up spills and leaks.

Additional Precautions

- Post the Nebraska Regional Poison Center number, 955-5555 or 1-800-222-1222, and the phone number for your family doctor near the telephone.
- If you call your poison control center or doctor in an emergency, be sure to have the poisoning agent's original container and label handy.
- Get trained in First Aid to deal more effectively with poisonings and other emergency situations.



**Greater
Omaha
Chapter**

11620 M Circle, Omaha, NE 68137
402-896-0454 • www.SafeNebraska.org