



Keeping Medications and Household Products Out of Children's Reach:

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

NYC
Bill de Blasio
Mayor

Administration for Children's Services
David A. Hansell
Commissioner

Department of Health & Mental Hygiene
Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH
Commissioner

Keep your children safe by following some easy and helpful tips



People take medications to feel better and treat common conditions. However, many medications can be extremely dangerous, especially to a child. Medicines need to be given and taken in the right dose, by the right person, at the right time.

Common prescriptions and over-the-counter medications, including opioids and acetaminophen, can be deadly to children and adults.

Common household products (especially those that are brightly colored) can be easily mistaken for candy or food, and are also dangerous to children. These include:

- Laundry detergent pods
- Household cleaners (oil-based products such as pine oil and furniture polish)
- Mouthwash and perfumes
- Anti-freeze and windshield wiper fluid

Protect Your Children

Always Keep Medications and Household Products Stored In their Original Containers with the Label Intact

- Keep medications tightly closed and make sure the safety cap is locked (twist it until you hear the “click”).
- Do not store medications or other household products in a beverage or food container.

Keep Medications Secure

- Always put medication away every time you use it.
- Always store medications out of reach away from where a child can access it.
- The best way to keep medications safe is in a locked box or cabinet.
- Keep the lights on and wear your glasses whenever taking or giving medicine.
- Remind guests to keep bags, purses, and coats free of medications which can accidentally spill or be accessed by children.

Dispose of Medicines Safely

- Dispose of expired and unused medications and household products safely.
- Call the Poison Control Center to find out the best way to get rid of your medicines.

Teach Your Children About Medication Safety

- Never call medication “candy” to get them to take it.
- Tell your child what medication is and not to take it unless given by you or another trusted adult.

What to Do in an Emergency

Some Common Signs That a Poisoning Exposure Has Happened:

- An open container nearby
- Pills in the mouth
- Strange odor on the breath
- Burns around the mouth
- Upset stomach, nausea, or vomiting
- Dizziness or unconsciousness

Even if there are no immediate symptoms, it is important to call and speak to the Poison Specialists right away about any possible poisoning exposures.

Stay Calm, Act Fast

Call 911 right away if a child is having trouble breathing, having seizures or is unconscious. Call the Poison Control Center at **212-POISONS (212-764-7667)** while you are waiting for the ambulance.

If the child is awake, alert and not having difficulty breathing call the Poison Control Center right away at **212-POISONS (212-764-7667)**.

When You Call the Poison Control Center, Be Ready to Provide the Following Information:

- Your name and the name of your child
- The telephone number you are calling from
- The name of the product or substance involved
- The amount involved
- The age and weight of your child
- How long ago the poisoning happened
- Your child’s symptoms

Follow Instructions:

- Ask questions if you do not understand something.
- Do not try to make the child vomit.
- Do not stick your finger down the child’s throat.
- Do not give the child anything by mouth unless told to do so by the Poison Control Center or a doctor.