



Poisoning and Poison Control Centres across Canada

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Most poisoning injuries occur in the home. Children, who are curious by nature, explore their environment as part of their innate development. They learn about new things through play, i.e. trying to open containers, mimicking what they see adults do, and through touch and taste - the dreaded 'hand to mouth' syndrome. There are hundreds of potentially hazardous toxins lurking in each and every room of your home, many of which do not have '*First Aid Treatment*' instructions included on the label or within the packaging.

To help keep your child safe from poisoning, keep all medications and potential poisons in their original containers and keep chemicals, medications, cleaning supplies, paints and art supplies safely stored in a locked cabinet or box out of the reach of children.

As a proactive measure we recommend you keep the phone number of your local **Poison Control Centre** (please see listing below) by your home phone and also program it into your cell and home telephone.

- ➔ **If your child is exposed to any poisonous substance by mouth, inhalation, eye or skin exposure, FIRST AID TREATMENT measures MUST be taken.**
- ➔ **In an Emergency dial '911' immediately.**
- ➔ **DO NOT call the Poison Control Centre in an emergency.**

When to call 911

Call 911 or your local emergency number immediately:

- ➔ If your child is unconscious
- ➔ If your child has collapsed, is convulsing, or is having a seizure
- ➔ If your child is having difficulty breathing or swallowing
- ➔ If your child is suffering an anaphylactic reaction

Call your local Poison Control Centre:

- ➔ If a poisoning is suspected

In Both Cases

- ➔ Have the poison and packaging at hand
- ➔ Describe the situation that took place by stating:
 - ▶ The name of the poison was taken
 - ▶ How much was taken
 - ▶ When the poison was taken
- ➔ Describe your child's current state, age and weight

REMEMBER

- ➔ Be very careful not to taste, touch or breathe in the poison
- ➔ If the suspected poison is a household cleaner or other chemical, read the label and follow instructions for accidental poisoning.
- ➔ If the product is toxic or if you can't identify the poison, if it's medication, or if there are no instructions, you will need to call your local Poison Control Centre and follow the treatment instructions.
- ➔ Symptoms and treatments can vary depending on what and how much has been swallowed, spilled on the skin or sprayed in the eye.
- ➔ A child may be poisoned if he/she is given the wrong medicine or wrong dose of medicine.
- ➔ Be sure to take the poison container (or any pill bottles) with you to the hospital.

Signs and Symptoms of Poisoning

If you suspect a child has been exposed to a poison:

- ➔ **DO NOT** wait for symptoms to occur.
- ➔ **DO NOT** try to make the child vomit because this can do more harm than good.
- ➔ **DO** call your local Poison Control Centre immediately and follow their instructions (please see provincial telephone numbers below).

The **Poison Control Centre** will obtain a brief history from you and provide the appropriate advice. Many poisoning exposures in children are mild and can be safely managed at home so try to remain calm. Staff from the Poison Control Centre will tell you how to handle the exposure. You may be advised to take your child to your doctor or hospital.

Signs and Symptoms

- ➔ Burns or redness around the mouth and lips caused by drinking poisons
- ➔ Breath that smells like chemicals such as gasoline, paint thinner, etc.
- ➔ Burns, stains and odours on your child, on his/her clothing, or on the furniture, floor, rugs or other objects in the surrounding area
- ➔ Empty medication bottles or scattered pills
- ➔ Vomiting, difficulty breathing, sleepiness, confusion or other unexpected signs

Treatment in hospital may include:

- 1) Blood tests
- 2) Activated charcoal (to bind some drugs so the body can't absorb them)
- 3) An antidote
- 4) Admission for close observation
- 5) Repeat tests

For Poisons Swallowed

- ➔ Immediately remove any toxic substance that is visible in the child's mouth.
- ➔ Call your local Poison Control Centre to receive instructions.
- ➔ **Do not** give your child anything to eat or drink, or induce vomiting by administering Syrup of **Ipecac** unless instructed to do so by the Poison Control Centre.
- ➔ **Do not** administer **Activated Charcoal** to promote the elimination of poisons.
- ➔ If your child is unconscious, convulsing, or having difficulty breathing, call 911 immediately.

For Poisons Inhaled

- ➡ If your child has been exposed to poisonous fumes, such as carbon monoxide, immediately take him/her into fresh air.
- ➡ If your child is breathing and has a pulse, call your Poison Control Centre to receive further instructions.
- ➡ If your child **does not have** a pulse or has stopped breathing start rescue breathing and administer CPR immediately.

For Poisons to the Eye

- ➡ Flush the eye with cool or lukewarm water in a shower for 20 minutes or until help arrives.
- ➡ Ask your child to blink continuously.
- ➡ Call your local Poison Control Centre to receive instructions.
- ➡ Call 911 or go to the nearest hospital if:
 - ▶ your child is in intense pain for more than a few minutes
 - ▶ the eye looks injured
 - ▶ if there is a loss of vision

For Poisons on the Skin

- ➡ If poison spilled on the child's clothing remove the contaminated clothing.
- ➡ Flush the skin under gently running lukewarm water for at least 15 minutes.
- ➡ Call your local Poison Control Centre to receive instructions.

CANADIAN POISON CONTROL CENTRES

Alberta

Poison and Drug Information Service (PADIS)
Foothills Hospital
1403-29th Street N.W.
Calgary, AB T2N 2T9
Tel: (403) 944-1414
Toll Free: 1-800-332-1414

British Columbia

BC Drug and Poison Information Centre (DPIC)
655 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4R4
Tel: (604) 682-5050
Toll Free: 1-800-567-8911

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Manitoba

Manitoba's Poison Control Centre
Children's Hospital
840 Sherbrook Street
Winnipeg, MB R3A 1S1
Tel: (204) 787-2591 or call 911

New Brunswick

Clinidata division of Sykes Assistance Services Corporation
Poison Information Centre
774 Main St 6th floor
Moncton NB E1C 9Y3
Dial 911

Newfoundland and Labrador

Newfoundland and Labrador
Poison Information Centre
The Janeway Child Health Centre
300 Prince Philip Drive
St. John's, NL A1B 3V6
Tel: (709) 722-1110
Toll Free: 1-866-727-1110

Northwest Territories

Emergency Department
Stanton Territorial Hospital
550 Byrne Road
PO Box 10
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2N1
Tel.: (867) 669-4100

Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia Poison Information Centre
The IWK Health Centre
PO Box 3070
Halifax, NS B3J 3G9
Tel: (902) 470-8161
Toll Free: 1-800-565-8161

Nunavut

Qikiqtani General Hospital
PO Box 1000, Stn. 1025
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0
Tel: 1-800-268-9017

Ontario

Ontario Poison Centre
The Hospital for Sick Children
555 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M5G 1X8

Tel: (416) 813-5900
Toll Free: 1-800-268-9017

Prince Edward Island

Poison Information Centre
The IWK Health Centre
PO Box 3070
Halifax, NS B3J 3G9
Toll Free: 1-800-565-8161

Quebec

Centre anti-poison du Québec
1050 ch Ste-Foy
"L" wing 1st floor
Quebec, QC G1S 4L8
Tel: (418) 654-2731
Toll Free: 1-800-463-5060

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Poison Centre
Foothills Hospital
1403-29th Street N.W.
Calgary, AB T2N 2T9
Tel: (306) 766-4545
Toll Free: 1-866-454-1212

Yukon

Emergency Department
Whitehorse General Hospital
5 Hospital Road
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 3H7
Tel: (867) 393-8700