



Potentially Dangerous Household Products

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Five children aged 14 years and younger die every year in Canada from poisoning, and another 1,280 are hospitalized from serious injuries. Children swallowed poisonous products that were not stored properly or were taken out of their original container, such as bleaches, paint thinners, ammonia, and abrasive cleaners. Even a small amount of a chemical product can be harmful to a child. Bad taste and odours do not keep children away from chemical products. Chemical products can be poisonous, flammable, corrosive, and even explosive.

Safety Tips

- ➡ Teach children that the hazard symbols on the containers = **DANGER! DO NOT TOUCH!**
- ➡ Keep all chemical products in a locked cupboard that is out of the reach of children. Never let children play with the containers.
- ➡ Keep household chemical products in original containers. Do not transfer or store chemical products in beverage containers.
- ➡ Never cover up or remove labels and keep all safety information.
- ➡ Make sure that child-resistant closures are working properly. Please remember that child-resistant closures are not child-proof. Close the cap on the container tightly even if you set it down for a moment.
- ➡ Read the label and follow the instructions before each use of a chemical product.



- Never mix chemicals together as some mixtures can produce dangerous fumes.
- Keep the phone number for the poison control centre by your telephone.
- Keep other harmful products, such as cosmetics, drugs, vitamins, and first-aid treatment products, out of the sight and reach of children

If you have a poisoning emergency:

- Contact your Provincial Poison Centre by telephone immediately.
- If the victim is unconscious, not breathing or having a seizure, call 911.
- Please have available the name of the product, amount taken, and the time of the incident.

Some of the substances below are listed as commonly used household names rather than their scientific names. Please note that this is **NOT** the entire list of potentially toxic products. If in doubt, contact the Poison Control Centre immediately.

Cleaning, Bleaching Agents

Aerosols
 Alcohol
 Ammonia
 Amyl acetate
 Bathroom bowl cleaner
 Benzine
 Carbon tetra chlorine
 Cleaning fluids
 Copper and brass cleaner
 Detergents
 Drain cleaners
 Dry cleaning fluids
 Ethylene glycol
 Gun cleaners
 Kerosene
 Lighter fluid
 Metal cleaners and polishers
 Methyl alcohol
 Naphtha
 Oven cleaner
 Oxalic acid
 Petroleum distillates
 Turpentine
 Typewriter cleaner
 Window washing fluid



Drugs and Medicines



A.S.A.
 Antiseptics
 Children's fever drops
 Cold medications
 Contraceptive pills
 Corn and wart remover
 Cough medicines
 Home chemical testing agents
 Iodine
 Iron medicines
 Laxatives
 Narcotics
 Pain killers/relievers
 Rubbing alcohol
 Tranquilizers
 Vitamins
 (Most of the items in this category are only poisonous when taken orally by accident or in excess.)

Miscellaneous Household Products and Chemicals

Anti-rust products
 Antifreeze

Polishers and Waxes

Car wax
Furniture wax/polish
Kerosene
Mineral oil
Nail polish
Naphtha
Paint
Pine oil
Silver polish
Turpentine



Cosmetic Preparations

After shave
Bubble bath products
Cologne
Corn and wart remover
Cuticle removers
Dandruff shampoo
Eye shadow
Hair dyes/tints
Hair lotions
Hair remover
Hair sprays
Lacquers
Nail polish
Nail polish removers
Neutralizers
Perfume
Permanent-wave solution
Plasticizers
Resins
Shaving lotions/creams
Skin preparations
Tanning lotions

Carburetor cleaners
Deodorizing tablets
Epoxy glue
Fire extinguishing fluids
Garden sprays
Gasoline
Herbicides
Ink
Insecticides
Jewellery cleaners and cements
Laundry blueing
Leather polishes and dyes
Model cement
Pesticides
Rat killers (Rodenticides)
Rug adhesive
Shoe cleaner and polishes
Strychnine
Wax crayons



Solvents

Carbon tetrachloride
Grease spot remover
Kerosene
Lacquer remover
Lighter fluid
Methanol
Methyl alcohol
Nail polish remover
Paint remover
Paint thinner
Petroleum products
Turpentine
Wax remover



Children who suffer from allergies or asthma can be especially sensitive to the chemicals in everyday cleaning products. Children spend 80 per cent to 90 per cent of their time indoors, so cleaning products can pose health risks for them.



Organic Solvents

A solvent is a liquid that dissolves another substance whether it is solid, liquid or gaseous, i.e. solvents can be used to dissolve dirt on machinery. Many solvents are classified as organic solvents which are petroleum based. These and other solvents can be harmful to you and your children. Organic solvents are found in many common products like spot removers, cleaners, disinfectants, dry-cleaning chemicals, degreasers, aerosol sprays, cosmetics and paint strippers. They evaporate at room temperature and they have distinct smells. They enter into the body through the skin, lungs and digestive system, and are spread to various body tissues, including the placenta. They are drawn to fatty tissues including breast milk. Avoid organic solvents especially if you are pregnant because they are dangerous to a developing fetus. Organic solvents may be responsible for causing birth defects and harming a fetus's developing nervous system.

Dry Cleaning

Children can be more sensitive to the chemicals used in dry cleaning. Determine if dry cleaning is really necessary for certain clothes and household items. If it is unavoidable, find a dry cleaning service that uses non-toxic methods. Ask your dry cleaner what kind of chemicals they use. Don't take your clothes to a dry cleaner that uses perchloroethylene. If you're not sure about the chemical your dry cleaner uses, hang all dry cleaned items outdoors or in a well-ventilated location for at least two hours before you store them indoors.



Avoid disinfection 'overkill'



Many varieties of soap and cleaning products are marketed as anti-bacterial. Like disinfecting sprays these products sometimes contain pesticides that kill bacteria. Bacteria and disease transmission is a real threat in some situations, such as in backed-up sewers. If you're cleaning up after handling raw meat (although very hot, soapy water and good kitchen hygiene works too), over-using bacteria-killing products may interfere with the development of a child's healthy immune system.

Choose 'green' or non-toxic cleaning products

Today 'green' or non-toxic cleaning products are commonly available. Try to avoid cleaning products that have chlorine bleach or other chlorine-based chemicals. Chlorine is good for cleaning dirt and killing germs but it's also highly toxic. Chlorine reacts with organic material and other chemicals, and can create long-living toxic chemicals that can pollute indoor air, stay on household surfaces, and be flushed into the sanitation system. Be a wise consumer!





Canadian Association of Poison Control Centres (CAPCC)

Established in 1982, the Canadian Association of Poison Control Centres provides a centralized forum for communication, information & idea exchange among Canadian Poison Centres. While its members are primarily professionals working in Poison Control Centres, other members have included pharmacists, pharmaceutical companies, forensic toxicologists, public health staff and emergency physicians.

To access Poison Prevention Materials, obtain a listing of provincial centres, read the latest poison reports, or send an email, please click on [Canadian Association of Poison Control Centres](#). This site does not provide emergency assistance to individuals seeking information on specific treatment for poisoning or other diseases.