

! WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

In 2013, Florida poison control centers got more than 50,000 calls about kids under 12 who had gotten poisoned. The good news is that most of these poisonings were safely treated at home with help from poison control. It's also good news that it's very rare for a child to die from poison these days.



? HOW DOES IT HAPPEN?

Anyone can get poisoned. Most poisonings happen to small children who like to explore and put things in their mouths. Even older kids can get poisoned by “lookalike products.” These are chemicals or cleaners that look just like foods or drinks. The most dangerous lookalike product is medicine: to small children it looks just like candy. Some pills for pain can kill a child with just one dose! Even older children need help from grown-ups to take medicine safely.

Kids spend lots of time outside, and that can mean getting stung by a bee or scorpion, or bitten by a spider or snake. Even some toads can squirt poison at a curious kid or dog. Poison doesn't have to be eaten or sipped: you can get poison on your skin, in your eyes or even breathe it into your lungs.

✓ PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- Always ask first! Don't put anything in your mouth you're not sure is safe to eat or drink and watch out for little brothers or sisters who don't know better.
- Watch out for poison kept where someone could make a mistake. Medicine and chemicals should be out of sight – and out of reach.
- Be careful with critters! Don't bother bees, spiders or snakes.
- Stand up for yourself. Don't let anyone push you to take medicine or drugs not given to you by your parent or doctor. The wrong medicine can poison, too!
- Remind your parents to put 1-800-222-1222 into all your cell phones. Even grown-ups make mistakes with poison or medicine.

🔍 RESOURCES

- Danger Rangers – Poison Patrol – Activities and videos for kids <http://dangerrangers.com/resources.php>
- “Choose Your Poison” Pills vs. Candy Game (California Poison Control System) www.pillsvscandy.com
- Food Poisoning Prevention - Partnership for Food Safety Education <http://www.fightbac.org/kids>

For any poisoning or medicine mistake, call your poison control center immediately at 1-800-222-1222.

Calls are answered by doctors, nurses and pharmacists, and are quick, free and confidential. www.floridapoisontcontrol.org