



FLORIDA/USVI POISON INFORMATION CENTER - JACKSONVILLE

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FLORIDA'S POISON CONTROL CENTERS ISSUE SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

JACKSONVILLE, FL — As summer gets into full swing in the Sunshine State, the Florida/USVI Poison Information Center – Jacksonville is advising you to keep summer safety at the top of your mind.

"Poison control centers see an uptick of calls during the summer months," said Dr. Jay L. Schauben, Director of the Florida/USVI Poison Information Center – Jacksonville. "The kids are out of school, families are enjoying the outdoors, and unfortunately that can lead to the potential for an increased number of potentially toxic exposures."

The Florida/USVI Poison Information Center – Jacksonville offers the following tips to help ensure a safe summer:

Insect Repellent Usage:

- Read and follow product instructions carefully; some products are not meant to be applied to the skin.
- Do not apply onto a child's hands, eyes, mouth, or cut/irritated skin; spray repellent onto adult's hands then apply to child's face. Do not spray on children's hands because they tend to rub their eyes or mouths.
- Do not use combination sunscreen/insect repellent products. Sunscreen needs to be reapplied every two hours, but repellent should not be reapplied.
- DEET should not be used on children younger than two months old.
- After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.

Snakes and Spider Bites:

- If you believe you have been bitten by a venomous snake (exotic species or those indigenous to Florida: e.g. coral snake, pigmy rattlesnake, cottonmouth (water moccasin), Eastern diamondback rattlesnake, copperhead, or canebrake (timber) rattlesnake) then proceed to an emergency department or call 911 if there is trouble breathing or the patient is unconscious. You can call the poison center for additional advice.
- If bitten by a snake, remove jewelry and tight clothes, immobilize the extremity if possible, keep affected area at or below the heart, and wash the area gently. DO NOT feed the victim, make cuts or place ice on the bitten extremity, or apply a tourniquet.
- Call the poison control center immediately if you have been bitten by a spider.

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Other Outdoor Hazards:

- At the beach, a spray bottle of vinegar can be used as first aid for jellyfish stings. Call the poison control center for specific treatment advice.
- Treat all wild mushrooms as poisonous unless you can absolutely identify them as a non-poisonous variety. Last year Florida's Poison Control Centers treated more than 100 mushroom ingestions in children under the age of six.
- Apply a baking soda paste to insect stings, including fire ants, bees, wasps, caterpillars. Call the poison control center for more specific treatment advice.

Pool Chemical Safety:

- Ensure you are in a well-ventilated area when using pool chemicals.
- Follow the product instructions carefully.
- Do not store pool chemicals where other flammable items may mix with them (i.e. pool chemicals and fertilizer).
- Never mix pool chemicals because it could create a toxic gas.
- Always keep pool chemicals stored up and away from children.

Proper Pesticide Use:

- Read the entire label and follow product instructions; make sure product is properly stored and disposed of according to label.
- Keep all pesticides in their original containers.
- Avoid using products that require leaving powder or pellets in areas where children or pets may have access to them.

For more information or to schedule an interview, the media may contact Brie Burge, Media Relations/Education Associate, at 904.244.7978 or burge@poison.ufl.edu.

The mission of the Florida/USVI Poison Information Center - Jacksonville is to provide exceptional care for individual patients and for supporting public health through information, surveillance, education, and research. Experts staff the Poison Help Hotline at 800.222.1222 that provides free, confidential, expert medical advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year from toxicology specialists, including nurses, pharmacists, physicians, and poison information providers.

The Florida/USVI Poison Information Center - Jacksonville is a cooperative effort between the University of Florida College of Medicine, UF Health Jacksonville, the University of Florida Health Science Center - Jacksonville, and the State of Florida, Department of Health, Children's Medical Services. The Florida/USVI Poison Information Center - Jacksonville is designated as an accredited regional poison control center by the American Association of Poison Control Centers. To learn more, visit floridapoisoncontrol.org, like us on [Facebook](#), and follow us on [Twitter \(@FloridaPoison\)](#).

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