



PARENT PLUS

INFORMATION FROM YOUR PEDIATRICIAN

Keep curious kids safe by poison-proofing your home

Young children are curious and like to put things in their mouths. Parents, therefore, must keep medicines, cleaning products, pesticides, antifreeze, cosmetics and other dangerous substances out of youngsters' reach.

The American Academy of Pediatrics and other safety experts recommend that parents take the following steps to poison-proof their homes:

- Store medicines, cleaners and other dangerous products in a locked cabinet, preferably out of sight and reach of children.
- If you must store items under the sink, use safety latches that lock every time you close the cabinet.
- Buy and keep all medicines in containers with safety caps. Keep in mind these caps are child-resistant, not child-proof.
- Do not let children watch you take medicine because they may try to copy you.
- Check the label every time you give medicine to make sure you are giving the right medication and dose. Mistakes are common in the middle of the night, so always turn on a light.
- Store products in their original containers. Never put poisonous products in containers that were used for food, especially empty drink bottles, cans or cups.

- To dispose of medications, check instructions on the drug label to see if they can be flushed down the toilet or poured down the drain. If not, take the medication out of the original container and mix with coffee grounds, kitty litter or any other unappetizing substance to prevent children from eating the medication. Place mixture in a sealable bag or disposable container with lid; be sure any personal information is concealed; then drop the item in the trash, along with the empty drug containers.

If parents find their child near an open or empty container of a nonfood item, get the child away from the product. If the child has some of it in his or her mouth, make the child spit it out or remove it with your fingers. Then take the child to a doctor and bring the container and anything removed from the child's mouth to help determine what kind of treatment the child needs.

If a child is unconscious, not breathing or having seizures, call 911 or the local emergency number right away. If your child does not have these symptoms, call the poison center at 1-800-222-1222.

— David Ma

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