

❖ 24-hour advice

The National Poisons Centre provides free advice on poisons and poison prevention, as well as emergency advice in the event of a poisoning.

The Centre can advise on the following:

- How to safely store and handle poisons in the home.
- How to keep children safe from poisons.
- What to do if a poisoning or suspected poisoning occurs.
- How to identify poisonous plants.
- How to safely store and handle poisons in the workplace.

Poison helpline

If you think your child may have been poisoned, immediately call the National Poisons Centre helpline on:

0800 POISON
(0800 764 766)

Do not make your child vomit or give anything to eat or drink until you have obtained advice.

For additional copies of this brochure or other injury prevention information, call **0800 THINKSAFE (0800 844 657)**, or check out the ACC website www.acc.co.nz

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Prevent poisoning

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE FROM POISONS



Poisoning is a major cause of hospitalisation for young children in New Zealand. On average, two children are admitted to hospital every day because of swallowing poisons.

Small children are at greatest risk of poisoning. Their skills are developing so quickly that they will often surprise you with what they can do. A cupboard that they couldn't climb up to a few days ago, may well be within reach today!

Toddlers and pre-schoolers learn by exploring, and most things go straight into their mouths. They don't have the ability to recognise danger or to know what substances will harm them. Many medicines and household cleaners look just like lollies or drinks to a toddler.

Remember, even if a poison is well out of reach but children can see it, they will often try to climb up to it. Always keep poisons where children can't see them.

❖ A poison-safe environment

It is important to keep children safe from poisons in every situation.

IN THE HOME...

- Store poisons, such as household cleaners, detergents and medicines, up high, and out of sight and out of reach of children.
- Install child safety catches on cupboard doors.
- Ask your pharmacist to use child safety caps on all medicines (some of these caps may involve a small additional cost).
- Store poisonous substances in their original containers – never in food or drink containers.
- Keep handbags containing medicine out of reach of children.
- Supervise children closely when visiting other homes – where poisons may not be stored as safely as in your own home.
- Safely dispose of all poisons, such as unused medicines, garden chemicals and cleaning fluids.

OUTSIDE THE HOME...

- Ensure all chemicals, solvents, paints and sprays in garden sheds, worksheds and garages are kept up high, and out of sight and out of reach of children.
- Learn how to recognise poisonous plants – call the National Poisons Centre on **0800 POISON (0800 764 766)** for more information.

(The National Poisons Centre 0800 POISON helpline has been made possible by funding from ACC.)

❖ Child safety caps

Child safety caps on medicine containers are a good idea because they make it more difficult for a child to open the container. Remember though, “child safety” is not the same as “child proof”. Many children are able to eventually work out how to open a container fitted with a child safety cap. Therefore, make sure that all medicines are stored up high, and out of sight and out of reach of children.