



The New Jersey Poison Information & Education System  
Serving New Jersey Since 1983

## NEWS RELEASE



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### Be Aware...Be Safe Kickoff Summer with Safety on your Mind

24/7 Multilingual Hotline: 1-800-222-1222  
Real People. Real Answers.

Dr. Steven Marcus, Executive and Medical Director  
Dr. Bruce Ruck, Director, Drug Information and Professional Education  
New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES)

*Available for Interviews*

**NEWARK, N.J. — May 27, 2011** - As Memorial Day weekend rounds the corner and June 1<sup>st</sup> kicks off Home Safety Month, the NJ Poison experts warn families of potential dangers they may face as we kickoff Summer 2011. From barbeques to gardening, from opening pools to yard cleanup, the Poison Control Center staff is here 24 hours a day/7 days a week to help in the event of an emergency or when you have any concerns.

#### Food (Any food made with mayonnaise or egg, meat, poultry, fish, seafood, etc.)

- Cold foods should be kept refrigerated when not being served.
- **Do Not Cross-Contaminate!** Cooked foods should not be placed on any unwashed plates/containers that previously held raw meat, poultry, fish, or seafood.
- Always wash hands and counters before preparing food. Use clean utensils for cooking and serving.
- Do not let food sit out at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

#### Medication (prescription, over-the-counter, herbal, dietary)

- When friends and family visit, make sure all of their medications are kept out of reach of children and pets (such medications are preferably locked up)
- Lock up all medicines – (prescription and non-prescription) – children and teens die every year because adults (parents, guardians, grandparents, etc) fail to realize the danger of keeping medicines in non-secure medicine cabinets, closets and drawers.
- Use caution in that some drinks may interact with medications. Check with your pharmacist or the Poison Control Center to find out if an interaction may occur. Some medications can greatly increase the chance for severe sunburn.

#### Chemicals (pool products, pesticides, fertilizers, lamp oil, kerosene, lighter fluids, automotive fluids, etc.)

- Jugs containing lamp oil **MUST** be stored in locked cabinets away from food and drinks. Lamp oil refill bottles closely resemble juice containers. It is difficult to pour the liquid directly from the bottle into the torch and frequently the user pours the liquid into a plastic or paper cup in order to then transfer it into the torch. This leaves a cup with what appears to be lemonade or apple juice sitting in it, a dangerous invitation to disaster! When accidentally taken by mouth, such lamp oils can enter the lungs causing pneumonia and death.
- Read the directions on the label before using.
- Keep locked up and up high and out of reach of children and pets.
- Store in the product's original, clearly-marked container. Always use child-resistant caps.
- Store chemicals in a cool, dry, well ventilated area with a locked entry.
- Always choose the right pesticide for the job at hand.
- **Do Not** apply products on a windy day.
- Wear protective clothing, masks, eye protection when applying chemicals. Wash clothes, footwear or any exposed skin that comes in contact with chemicals.

### Spring/Summer Cleaning

- **Good ventilation** is the key to getting harsh fumes from cleaning products out of the house. Simply opening a window is not enough to eliminate dangerous fumes or odors. You may want to use an exhaust fan to eliminate the fumes and to circulate fresh air into the area you are cleaning.
- **Test your carbon monoxide & smoke detectors** to make sure they are working.
- **Do Not mix products –combining** products can produce toxic fumes.
- **Clean** when children and pets are not present. Keep products locked up and clean up all spills immediately and thoroughly.
- **Make sure to properly discard** medicines that are not being used. Check expiration dates frequently on all over-the-counter and prescription medications kept in the home. Recent recommendations include combining expired or leftover medicines with used coffee grounds, kitty litter, or something else bad-tasting to children and animals. Place this in a coffee can with a lid, and discard with your household trash.

### Backyard Safety

- Know the name of plants and flowers in and around your home, including your yard and garden.
- Be alert to insects that may bite or sting.
- Make sure all gardening, lawn care products, and pool products are stored in locked cabinets.
- **Do Not** pick plants/mushrooms to eat from your backyard or fields. Even experts are often fooled by look-alikes which are toxic.

If you suspect a poisoning, **CALL THE POISON CONTROL CENTER'S HOTLINE IMMEDIATELY at 1-800-222-1222**, for treatment advice. The hotline should be called both for emergency poisonings as well as for non-emergency questions regarding medications, household products, plants, environmental contaminants, or other poisons. The hotline is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week! Real People. Real Answers.

*Remember, Help Is Just a Phone Call Away!*

### About NJPIES

As New Jersey's only poison control center, the New Jersey Poison Information & Education System provides information on poison prevention and treatments. Chartered in 1983, NJPIES provides free consultation through telephone hot line services and the Web. Medical professionals such as physicians, registered nurses and pharmacists offer confidential advice regarding poison emergencies and provide information on poison prevention, drugs, food poisoning, animal bites and more. These specialists are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

NJPIES coordinates state poison education and research, and is designated as the regional poison center by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and the American Association of Poison Control Centers. It tracks incidences of adverse reactions to food, drugs and vaccines in order to monitor potential public health issues and provide data to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A division of the Department of Preventive Medicine and Community Health of the New Jersey Medical School of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, its state-of-the-art center is located on the school's Newark campus.

New Jersey residents seeking immediate information about treating poison emergencies should call the bilingual toll-free hot line, 1-800-222-1222, any time. The hearing impaired may call (973) 926-8008. For more information, visit [www.njpies.org](http://www.njpies.org) or call (973) 972-9280.

### About UMDNJ

The University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey is the nation's largest freestanding public health sciences university, with more than 5,500 students attending. The state's three medical schools, a dental school, a graduate school of biomedical sciences, a school of health-related professions, a school of nursing and a school of public health are housed on five campuses — Newark, New Brunswick/Piscataway, Scotch Plains, Camden and Stratford. Annually, there are more than two million patient visits at UMDNJ facilities and faculty practices at the campuses. UMDNJ operates University Hospital, a level I trauma center in Newark, and University Behavioral HealthCare, a mental health and addiction services network.

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