

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

MEDIA ALERT

Media Contacts:
800-222-1222 (800-962-1253 outside NJ)

10 Summer Safety Reminders to Prevent a Trip to the ER Labor Day Weekend

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Available for Interviews

(Newark, NJ) – August 31, 2015 — Labor Day weekend is the last summer holiday to be celebrated. Don't risk celebrating it inside the emergency room of your local hospital for something that could have easily been prevented. Remember, most unintentional poisoning injuries occur at home and are preventable!

From youngest to oldest, all people including pets are at risk. Poisoning is now the leading cause of unintentional injury death in New Jersey. Data shows that most poisoning emergencies involve common household items like medicines (prescription, over-the-counter, dietary/herbal), cleaning supplies, cosmetics, liquid laundry detergent packets, car maintenance fluids, torch/lamp fuel, etc.).

As you prepare to celebrate this Labor Day weekend, the NJ Poison Experts would like you to take a few moments to brush up on the summer safety tips below. Doing so could prevent serious injury to you, a loved one, or even a pet.

10 Summer Safety Reminders

- Do not cross-contaminate! Cooked foods should not be placed on any unwashed plates/containers that previously held raw meat, poultry, fish, or seafood.
- Use a meat thermometer to make sure cooked meats have reached the safe internal temperature. The color of meat and poultry is not a good indicator of safety.
- When friends and family visit, **lock up** all of their medications (prescription and over-the-counter). Children, teens and pets 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 with alcoholic beverages since the alcohol may interact with medications. Check with your pharmacist or the Poison Control Center to find out if an interaction may occur.
- Store charcoal lighter fluid and jugs containing lamp/torch oil in locked cabinets, away from food and drink and out of sight and reach of children and pets. Swallowing these products can lead to serious poisoning and even death.
- Never use your grill indoors, in a garage, shed, etc. Carbon monoxide poisoning can result.
- Do not pick plants/mushrooms to eat from your backyard or fields. Even experts are often fooled by look-alikes which are toxic.
- Use caution in the sun because some medications can greatly increase the chance for severe sunburn even when using sunscreen. Speak to your physician and pharmacist about the medications you take and determine if they increase your risk for sunburn!

- Use insect repellent to prevent the spread of disease from mosquitoes and ticks. Products that contain DEET, picaridin and permethrin may be used on children older than 2 months of age. Oil of lemon eucalyptus is not recommended on children under 3 years of age.
- Do not spray insect repellent directly on the face because it may irritate the eyes and mouth. Instead, spray it onto hands and then rub it onto the face. Avoid applying repellents to broken skin or wounds or under clothing.

"We are here to help you!" said Steven Marcus, MD, executive and medical director of the NJ Poison Center. "If you believe your child, pet, or anyone else has ingested something that could be harmful, it's good to know expert help is just a phone call away."

Program the Poison Help number (1-800-222-1222) into your cell phones and contact us (NJ Poison Experts) immediately for help, anytime day or night, even on weekends and holidays. We offer fast, free, expert medical advice delivered confidentially with multilingual capability. Call 800-222-1222, chat www.njpies.org, or text 8002221222@njpies.org. The hearing impaired may call 973-926-8008. If someone is unconscious, not breathing, seizing/convulsing, bleeding profusely, difficult to arouse/wake up, etc. call 911 immediately, otherwise call the NJ Poison Center.

Remember, every minute counts in poisoning situations so do not take chances by either waiting until symptoms occur or waste valuable time looking up information on the Internet. Just pick up the phone and call us (800-222-1222). Many of the calls the poison center gets are genuine emergencies. Having a poison expert give you exact instructions for your specific situation can help significantly during those critical first few minutes. A quick response by both the caller and the poison center expert can make a difference in preventing serious injury and saving lives

Help is Just a Phone Call Away!

We are social. Join us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/njpies) and Twitter ([@NJPoisonCenter](https://twitter.com/NJPoisonCenter)) for breaking news, safety tips, trivia questions, etc. Stay tuned for more poison prevention week safety information.

Real People. Real Answers.

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 Emergency Medicine of the New Jersey Medical School of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. NJPIES has a state-of-the-art center located on the school's Newark campus. NJPIES is funded, in part, by the NJ Department of Health and the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

New Jersey residents seeking immediate information about treating poison emergencies, and those with any drug information questions, should call the toll-free hot line, **800-222-1222**, any time. The hearing impaired may call **973-926-8008**. For more information, visit www.njpies.org or call **973-972-9280**.

About Rutgers

Established in 1766, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is America's eighth oldest institution of higher learning and one of the nation's premier public research universities. Serving more than 65,000 students on campuses, centers, institutes and other locations throughout the state, Rutgers is the only public university in New Jersey that is a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities.

Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) is the health care education, research, and clinical division of Rutgers University, comprising nine schools and their attendant faculty practices, centers, institutes and clinics; New Jersey's leading comprehensive cancer care center; and New Jersey's largest behavioral health care network.

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