

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

MEDIA ALERT

Media Contacts:

800-222-1222 (800-962-1253 outside NJ)

NJPIES Celebrates the Value of our Nation's Poison Centers -- National Poison Prevention Week 2016 --

Steven Marcus, MD, Medical Executive Director,
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New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES)

Available for Interviews

(Newark, NJ) – March 15, 2016 — When the unexpected happens (an unintentional poisoning exposure/injury), do you know who/where to call for immediate expert help? **Your local poison center 1-800-222-1222.**

Jointly, the nation's 55 poison centers have been saving lives and protecting the health of Americans through the Poison Help Line (1-800-222-1222) for decades. Poison centers offer direct, expert medical advice, prevention information, data collection and monitoring, and educational outreach at no cost to the public. "Poison experts are here to help with the most routine poison exposures as well as the unusual, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, year-round" said Steven Marcus, MD, Medical Executive Director of the NJ Poison Center. "Your local poison center is your primary defense against injury and death from poisoning."

Poisoning can happen anywhere and to anyone; involving a vast array of substances. "Anything can be a poison if it's used in the wrong way, in the wrong amount, or by the wrong person; the dose determines how toxic something is or isn't in the body," said Dr. Marcus. Calls for help often involve common household items like cleaning products/sprays, medicines, vitamins, personal care products, nicotine products, pesticides, alcohol, coins, batteries, magnets, and plants. Other exposures may include lead, wild mushrooms, animal bites and stings, berries, carbon monoxide, chemicals, car maintenance products, and many other types of nonpharmaceutical substances. While the majority of poisonings happen in the home, they can also occur in the workplace, schools, and healthcare facilities.

"I would like to call your attention to the annual celebration of National Poison Prevention Week (NPPW), March 20-26, 2016. As we approach spring, I ask all New Jerseyans to mark the occasion by "poison proofing" their homes when they set out to do their spring cleaning." Be sure to go through the house room by room, including sheds and garages, and make sure potentially dangerous items are properly stored. Overlooking the potential dangers of common items unfortunately can be costly to the health and well-being of family members, including pets. For more prevention information [click here](#).

The good news is that unintentional poisoning injury and death are preventable, and if you need help, it's readily available by calling Poison Help at 1-800-222-1222. New Jersey residents can also contact the NJ Poison Center by chatting via www.njpies.org or texting 8002221222@njpies.org; the hearing impaired may also use their TTY and call 973-926-8008. Help is available in more than 150 languages.

The bottom line - Poison centers save lives, time and money making it a bargain for Americans. Because the majority of exposures reported to poison centers are treated at the exposure site (residence), millions of dollars are saved each year in unnecessary hospital visits, reducing medical costs and lost productivity. The public is not the only one who benefits from poison center services. Healthcare providers in emergency departments and hospitals rely on poison center experts to assist in the diagnosis and treatment of their patients as well.

Time is of the essence since poisons and medicines may act very quickly. Don't waste valuable time looking up information on the Internet when every minute counts. Having a poison expert give you exact instructions for your specific situation can help significantly during those critical first few minutes.

Call to action - Program the Poison Help Line (1-800-222-1222) into your cell phone and post it somewhere visible in your home and office. In the event of an exposure (your child, pet, or anyone), call Poison Help immediately for help. If someone is unconscious, not breathing, seizing/convulsing, bleeding profusely, difficult to arouse/wake up, etc. call 911.

Help is Just a Phone Call Away!

We are social. Join us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/njpies) and Twitter (@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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