



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



MEDIA ALERT

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Teen Suicides by Medication Overdoses Increase -- NJ Poison Experts See an Increase in Calls --

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

Example of Suicide Attempts by Teens

- 11 year old takes an excessive amount of Over-the-Counter (OTC) pain medications
- 13 year old ingests a relative's prescription pills and develops seizures
- 14 year old ingests a large amount of prescription antihistamines
- 14 year overdoses on own antidepressants
- 15 year old ingests nail polish remover
- 16 year old takes a massive amount of OTC sleep medications
- 17 year old takes mom's prescription antidepressants

Newark, N.J. — Feb. 28, 2012 — So far this year (Jan-Feb 2012), the NJ Poison Experts have consulted on over 150 cases regarding teenagers who have tried to commit suicide or intentionally harm themselves by overdosing on medications. The NJ Poison Experts strongly urge ALL adults to properly dispose of ALL medications that are no longer being used. Over-the-Counter (OTC) and prescription (Rx) medications can kill if not used according to the instructions on the label. Lock ALL medications in a lockable medicine cabinet or closet so teens do not have unsupervised access to them.

Call to Action – Help is Just a Phone Call Away

NJPIES leaders urge medical professionals, parents, educators, caregivers and the general public to call the toll-free poison center hot line, 800-222-1222, with any poison related question 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. The NJ poison experts recommend putting the number in all family cell phones as well as programming it as a speed dial number on landlines. In addition, the hotline number should be prominently posted near all phones in the home. 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 Preventive Medicine and Community Health of the New Jersey Medical School of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, it has a state-of-the-art center located on the school's Newark campus.

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 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 2 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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