

September 2016

## Poisoning



We all want to keep our children safe and secure and help them live to and reach to their full potential. A step toward achieving this goal is knowing how to prevent one of the leading causes of child injury, poisoning.

We all have everyday items in our homes, such as household cleaners and medicines – all can be very poisonous to children. Active, curious children might investigate—and sometimes try to eat or drink—anything that they find lying around.

There are ways you can help poison-proof your home and protect the children you love.

### Prevention Tips

**Lock them up.** Keep medicines and potential toxic products, such as cleaning solutions, in their original packaging so that children will not mistake them for something else.

### Don't keep it if you don't need it.

Safely dispose of unused, unneeded, or expired prescribed medication and over the counter medicine, vitamins, and supplements. To dispose of medicines, mix them with coffee grounds or kitty litter and throw them away.

**Read the label.** Always follow the label directions and read all warnings when giving medicines to children.

**Know the number.** Put the nationwide poison control centre phone number, on or near every telephone in your home and program it into your cell phone.

### Poison Information Centre 086 155 5777



Call the poison control centre or Netcare 911, if you think a child has been poisoned.

### Signs & Symptoms of Poisoning

- Burns or redness around the mouth
- Empty or half empty bottles or containers lying close to the child
- Berries or pieces of plants in the child's mouth
- Drowsiness and/or
- Unconsciousness.

### What to do if you suspect poisoning:



- Assess what has been swallowed, when and how much.
- Call for medical assistance
- Remove any visible objects from the child's mouth.
- **DO NOT** attempt to make him vomit. If he swallowed something corrosive (like household bleach), it will cause burns on its way back up.
- Keep the container of the product swallowed and tell the paramedics exactly what the child has taken.
- Do not give the child anything to drink as this may disperse the poison more quickly around their body.

### Important Emergency Numbers

**Netcare 911:**  
**082 911**

**SAPS:**  
**10111**

**Netcare Union Hospital**  
**011 724 2114**

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