

# Morning Safety Minute

Talking Points Topic: Poison Prevention/Medication Safety

Date: Thursday, March 9, 2017

Time: Two hits for each show—with different topics at 5am and 6am.

The 7am show can repeat the two main topics.

## Safety Facts:

- Poison Prevention Week is March 19-25, 2017
- Poisoning is the #1 cause of injury-related death in the U.S.
- One child every eight minutes is rushed to the emergency room due to medication poisoning.
- Although children under the age of 6 were involved in about half of poisoning exposures in 2014, they comprised only 1.4% of poisoning deaths. Most (66%) of deaths occurred among 20-59 year olds.

Let's face it, sometimes kids get into things that they probably shouldn't. Here are a few tips to keep little explorers from finding their way into household items that could be dangerous.

But just in case, we'll also show you what to do if your child accidentally ingests something harmful.

### 1) Safe Storage

- Always place medicines, including vitamins, in high storage places out of a child's reach.
- Most children get into medicines that are found on the ground or misplaced (27%), left in purses (20%), and on nightstands (20%).
- Remember that child-resistant does not mean child-proof; with time and persistence a child may be able to open the packaging.
- Common forgotten medications include: make-up, art supplies, eye drops, diaper rash cream, laxatives, vitamins, and vapor rub creams.
- The leading cause of nonmedical exposure calls to poison control centers for children age 5 and under were due to cosmetic and personal care products.
- Grandparents medication account for majority of poisonings (38%); mother's medicine (31%); sibling's medicine (12%); father's medicine (8%); Aunt/uncle medication (5%); known/other source (6%).
- Install child safety lock on cabinets or consider a personal lock box and clean out old, unused and expired medications frequently.

### 2) Safe Use

- Always use medications the way they were intended and prescribed to be used.
- Read the label and use the measuring device that came with the medication.
  - \* Kitchen utensils such as teaspoon and tablespoon will not measure the same as the device that came with the medication.
- Never share medications, even amongst household members.
- Never use "leftover" medications. The integrity of medications can change over time.

## Morning Safety Minute

- Don't adjust your dosage without consenting your prescriber.
- Give clear instructions for medications to grandparents or caregivers that may watch the child in your absence. Include time of dose given, amount of dose given, and the next time the dose can be administered.

### 3) Safe Disposal (Main Topic)

- Unused medications should be disposed as soon as possible to prevent unintentional use, diversion, or accidental ingestion.
- Medications should not be thrown in the trash, sink or toilet.
- There are Medication Disposal events and Permanent Medication Drop Boxes in New Hanover, Brunswick and Pender County.
  - \* Locations: Safe Kids NC site: <http://www.ncdoi.com/OSFM/safekids/>
  - \* Upcoming drop off events:
    1. NHRMC Medical Mall on Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup> from 9am-12pm.
    2. Doshier Memorial Hospital in Southport on Thursday, April 6<sup>th</sup> from 9am-1pm.

### 4) What to do if your child ingests a potentially harmful substance

- Store the number to the Poison Control in your phone: 1-800-222-1222; also place the number on your refrigerator for babysitters or other caregivers to access quickly.
  - \* Trained Pharmacists, Nurses and Doctors with backgrounds in poisons and medications are the ones that answer the phone.
  - \* It's a confidential call and available 24/7.
  - \* <http://www.ncpoisoncenter.org/>
- If the child has collapsed, is not breathing, or has a seizure, call 911.
- Do not give the child anything to ingest until you have discussed it with the poison control center.
  - \* Drinking water may make the situation worse and activate the substance.
- Have the container or bottle on hand to answer questions when calling.