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For More Information

Contact:

1319 Colony Street
Saskatoon, SK S7N 2Z1
Bus. 306.651.4300
Fax. 306.651.4301
info@skprevention.ca
www.skprevention.ca

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Kinsmen Telemiracle
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How to Prevent Poisoning

A poison is any substance that can harm a human. Poisons typically cause an adverse chemical reaction in the body. Poisons can enter the body four ways:

- 1) **Ingested** by being put in the mouth or swallowed
- 2) **Absorbed** by contacting the skin
- 3) **Inhaled** by breathing in the substance
- 4) **Injected** such as by insect bites or needles

Children are naturally curious and explore new places every day. Children come into closer contact with their environment than adults by crawling on the floor, picking things up to touch, and by tasting things. Children do not understand danger and are more sensitive to harmful substances than adults. Small amounts of adult medications or personal care products, such as mouthwash, can be fatal to your child.

Poison is the second highest injury-related cause of hospitalization for children aged 1-4 in Saskatchewan. Medication is the leading cause of poisoning in children.

It is very important to store chemicals, cleaning products, medications, vitamins, cosmetics, alcohol and tobacco in a locked cupboard out of sight and out of reach of your child.

Tips to Keep Your Home Safe

- Keep chemicals, cleaning products, medications, and vitamins in their original container with original labels.
- Never re-use chemical or cleaning product containers. Follow the directions on the containers to dispose of properly.
- Do not mix any household cleaners as they may produce toxic fumes.
- Replace the lid on a container immediately after using.

- Purchase products with child resistant caps or lids. Remember, children can open child resistant caps.
- For medicine that needs to be stored in the fridge, store on the top shelf at the back of the fridge so that your child cannot easily see or reach it. Do not store medication in the fridge door where it is easily accessible to your child.
- Avoid excessive bath oils, soaps, and bubble baths for infants and children. These products can result in skin irritations and urinary tract infections.
- Teach older children to recognize warning labels on products and what they mean.
- Make your car and home smoke-free. Second and third hand smoke contains harmful chemicals that are damaging to your child.

Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide is a colourless, odourless, tasteless gas that can be fatal to you and your family.

Carbon monoxide can be released by household appliances that are not functioning properly such as stoves, gas or wood burning fireplaces, and furnaces. The exhaust from cars contains carbon monoxide.

Install carbon monoxide detectors on all levels of the home and outside of sleeping areas. Follow manufacturer instructions for proper placement and maintenance of detectors.

If the carbon monoxide detector goes off, get out of the house immediately and call your local emergency service providers or 911.

Are There Poisons Hiding In Your Home?

What do you look for?

<p>LAUNDRY ROOM <i>Detergents & Fabric Softeners</i></p> <p><i>Bleach & Cleaning Solutions</i></p> <p><i>Fabric Dyes</i></p> <p><i>Single Load Laundry Packets</i></p> <p>YARD <i>Plants</i> <i>(Berries, seeds and flowers of plants may be poisonous. Watch for wild mushrooms growing.)</i></p> <p><i>Weed Killers, Insecticides & Fertilizers</i></p>	<p>BATHROOM <i>Cleaning Products</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilet Cleaners & Drain Openers • Other Products <p><i>Lotions & Creams</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aid Solutions • Hair Removal Products • Body Lotions <p><i>Personal Hygiene & Cosmetics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aftershave & Cologne • Hair Spray & Other Hair Products • Mouthwash, Toothpaste & Tooth Whiteners <p><i>Rubbing Alcohol</i></p> <p><i>Medicines, Vitamins & Herbal Products</i></p> <p><i>Air Fresheners</i></p>	<p>BEDROOM <i>Cosmetics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hair Spray & Hair Products • Nail Polish & Polish Remover • Aftershaves & Colognes • Deodorant <p><i>Medicines, Vitamins & Herbal Products</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth Control Pills & Other Medications 	<p>BASEMENT/GARAGE/STORAGE ROOM <i>Weed Killers, Insecticides & Fertilizers</i></p> <p><i>Paint & Paint Thinner</i></p> <p><i>Charcoal Lighter</i></p> <p><i>Gasoline & Motor Oil</i></p> <p><i>Antifreeze</i></p> <p><i>Windshield Washer Fluid</i></p> <p><i>Lime</i></p> <p><i>Mothballs</i></p> 
<p>LIVING ROOM <i>Plants</i> <i>(Talk to your local greenhouse or poison control to identify poisonous plants. Place a label with the plant name around the stalk of each plant; do not label on a stake in the soil that can be removed.)</i></p> <p><i>Tobacco, Cigarettes & Butts, Electronic Cigarette Cartridges</i></p> <p><i>Craft & Hobby Supplies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paint & Glue <p><i>Batteries</i></p>	<p>KITCHEN <i>Cleaning Products</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dishwasher & Dish Soap • Oven Cleaner & Drain Openers • Other Products <p><i>Medicines, Vitamins & Herbal Products</i></p> <p><i>Alcohol</i></p> <p><i>Tobacco, Cigarettes & Butts</i></p> <p><i>Vanilla Extract</i></p> <p><i>Spray Oils</i></p> <p><i>Pet Medications</i></p>		

Walk around your home and use this checklist to identify poisons to your child. Once you have identified poisonous substances, store appropriately following the tips on the previous page.

Take a CPR/First Aid course so you know what to do in the event of a poisoning. If a person is unconscious or not breathing, call emergency services (911) immediately.

Keep the number of the **Saskatchewan Poison Centre (1-866-454-1212)** by all phones and contact them if your child swallows or comes in contact with anything poisonous or you suspect your child has swallowed or come in contact with anything poisonous.

Information for this fact sheet was adapted from:

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Safe Kids Canada. *Carbon monoxide detectors can save your child's life*. May 28, 2010. <http://www.safekidscanada.ca/Parents/Safety-Information/Poison-Prevention/Monoxide-Detectors/Carbon-Monoxide-Detectors.aspx>

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The Hospital for Sick Children. *Poison-proof your home*. 2007. <http://www.specialtyfoodshop.ca/ontariopoisoncentre/custom/poisonproofhome2007.pdf>