A Four-Step Plan to Preventing Unintentional Poisonings

WASHINGTON, D.C. - It is National Poison Prevention Week 2015 (March 15-21) and the Poison Prevention Week Council (PPWC) is providing tips to prevent unintentional poison exposure in and around the home. Last year the American Association of Poison Control Centers received about 3 million calls from consumers for poison exposure treatment or information. From the kitchen to the laundry room and out to the garage, consumers may find potential poison dangers. So, the PPWC wants to promote four key steps to help prevent unintentional poisonings in the home.

First, follow the manufacturer’s recommendations and heed the product’s warnings. Second, always keep the product sealed in its original, and often child-resistant, containers. Third, store the product out of a child’s sight and reach. And finally, call the free Poison Help Line (800-222-1222) in case of an exposure.

“The Council is dedicated to raising awareness with our easy four step plan,” said Nancy Bock, Council Chair and Senior Vice President, Education at the American Cleaning Institute. “Increasing awareness with parents and caregivers and urging them to take an extra moment to ensure that products are stored properly will go a long way in keeping our families safe at home.”

For more than 50 years, the PPWC has warned of poison dangers associated with products such as medicines and various chemicals used in and around the home. Public education, child-resistant closure requirements and the experts at the Poison Help Line has helped reduce the number of pediatric poisoning deaths from about 400 a year in the early 1970s to about 30 a year today.

Still, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that about 80,000 children were taken to hospital emergency departments nationwide in 2013 due to poison-related exposure. Most of these poisoning incidents occur in the home. Awareness and prevention efforts must continue.
Preventing unintentional poisoning incidents start with the four key steps. For additional information on poison prevention, visit the National Poison Prevention Week’s website at www.poisonprevention.org and on Twitter @PreventPoison.

Public Law 87-319 (approved September 26, 1961) requested the President annually to designate the third week in March as National Poison Prevention Week. The observance, sponsored by the Poison Prevention Week Council, was designed to alert the American people to the problem of unintentional poisonings. For the past 50 years, National Poison Prevention Week has focused on preventing poisonings among children under 5 years of age.

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