

Got Preschoolers?

Poisoning Prevention Tips for Parents and Caregivers



Preschoolers are at risk of poisoning for many reasons. Even with coaching, they cannot reliably distinguish between what is safe and what is dangerous. Their natural curiosity leads them to open cabinets, purses, or drawers where harmful items may be stored. They put everything into the mouth. They like to imitate adult actions such as handling cleaning products or taking medicine.

This is all normal child behavior but it can lead to danger. It is up to adults to create a safer environment where young children can play and explore.

- Choose medicines and products with **child-resistant caps** whenever possible. Replace the caps tightly after every use.
- If possible, **take your own medicine** where children can't watch.
- **Don't** call medicine "candy."
- **Check medicine labels** to make sure you are giving the *right dose* of the *right product*.
- **Use the measuring devices** that come with liquid medicines, not kitchen spoons.
- **Don't give** oral cough & cold medicines to a child younger than 2 without a doctor's approval.
- Keep household products in their **original packaging**. Do not pour contents into dishes or containers used for food and drink.

The most important step you can take to prevent childhood poisoning is to keep all medicines and products up high, out of sight and reach.

This means giving guests a safe place to store their belongings.



WHO CAN HELP? If you think someone swallowed or handled something harmful, or if there has been a medicine mistake or overdose, call the **Blue Ridge Poison Center** right away: **1-800-222-1222**. Don't wait for symptoms. Specially trained nurses and doctors are standing by day or night. Free and confidential.