

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **North Dakota Observes Poison Prevention Week**

BISMARCK, N.D. – In honor of National Poison Prevention Week, March 18-24, the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) is discussing the facts behind some of the most common poison-related myths.

“There are many misconceptions about poisonings,” said Mandy Slag, injury prevention program director for the NDDoH. “Our goal is to educate North Dakotans about potentially hazardous substances and calling the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 for accurate information.”

Is it myth or fact?

**Myth:** Only parents of young children need to call the Poison Center.

**Fact:** Poisoning can come from products and medicines that people of all ages use. In addition, over one quarter of calls come from professionals such as nurses, doctors, and other staff at health care facilities.

**Myth:** Poisoning is not a big safety risk since it doesn't hurt that many people.

**Fact:** Drug poisoning is now the leading cause of unintentional injury death in the United States, causing more deaths than motor vehicle accidents or firearms.

**Myth:** If someone is poisoned, searching online can help you decide what to do.

**Fact:** Information on the internet can be misleading, which can lead to poor treatment advice or unnecessary panic. Experts at the Poison Center have the most up-to-date information.

**Myth:** Most poison exposures need to be treated in the hospital.

**Fact:** Over 90 percent of calls can be safely managed at home by calling the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.

**Myth:** If someone swallows something poisonous, you should make them throw up immediately.

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Fact: Vomiting can lead to more complications such as choking or infection in the lungs. Inducing vomiting or using Syrup of Ipecac is no longer recommended.

Myth: Medication bottles are child proof.

Fact: The safety caps mandated by the Poison Prevention Packaging Act of 1970 are only required to be child resistant. This is defined as keeping 80 percent of kids out of the package for 10 minutes. That means up to 20 percent of children tested were able to access the bottle's contents within that time span.

Poisoning is preventable. Here are some tips to help keep you and your loved ones safe:

- Save the nationwide Poison Center number (1-800-222-1222) to your cell or home phones or post it on your refrigerator.
- Keep medicines and household products in their original containers.
- Store all medicines and potentially poisonous products up high, out of sight, and locked.

Educate yourself about poison prevention and Poison Center services. Take the free online training course at <http://training.mnpoison.org>.

For more information about poison prevention, contact Mandy Slag, NDDoH at 800.472.2286 (press 1) or visit the website at [www.ndpoison.org](http://www.ndpoison.org). Poison resource materials can be ordered at [www.ndhealth.gov/injury/Injury\\_Prevention\\_Order\\_Form.aspx](http://www.ndhealth.gov/injury/Injury_Prevention_Order_Form.aspx).

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