

The Most **HAZARDOUS** Time of the Year



The winter season is an exciting and joyful time, but it can also be dangerous. With holiday celebrations, travel, out-of-town guests and other changes in families' routines, children—and adults—may encounter unexpected hazards that can lead to accidental poisoning. Amid the hustle and bustle, keep an eye out for these potential holiday hazards.

Medicines



Nearly half of all the calls to our poison center involving children under 6 are related to prescription or over-the-counter medicine. Many medicines look like candies or sweet drinks, and medications brought by visitors may be left in places children can access—such as a night table next to a guest's bed. Make sure you and your visitors lock medications up where youngsters can't explore.

Alcohol



An abandoned glass left within reach of little hands during a party could contain enough alcohol to seriously harm a child. Children do not metabolize alcohol the same way adults do, and less than one ounce of an adult beverage can be very dangerous. Any child showing signs of inebriation needs *immediate* medical care.

Batteries



Small "button" batteries that come in toys, watches, gadgets and decorations are easy to swallow and damaging to children's digestive systems. Make sure small batteries are kept out of reach of tots and that battery compartments are properly closed on new toys.

Household Products



About 10% of the poison exposures to kids under 6 involve common products such as cleansers, laundry soaps and disinfectants. As you ready your house for holiday guests, be extra cautious to keep all your products out of the reach of little hands.

Nicotine & Tobacco

Nicotine from cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and e-cigarette refills can be toxic to children. Empty ashtrays promptly and store tobacco products and e-cigarette kits out of reach.



Personal Care Products



Lots of the items in Grandma's purse or Uncle's suitcase are hazards to curious tots. Makeup, hand sanitizer, aftershave, nail polish remover and mouthwash are just some of the products that are dangerous to ingest. Make sure your guests lock these items away from kids.

Carbon Monoxide

If you use a fireplace or a kerosene or propane heater, make sure you have a carbon monoxide detector in your home. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas, and symptoms of exposure are similar to the effects of alcohol, so it's easy to miss.



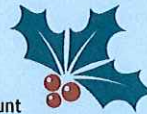
Food Poisoning

Food poisoning can put a damper on the festivities quickly. Frequent culprits this time of year include stuffing cooked inside the turkey and foods left out in a buffet-style for too long. Be sure to cook foods thoroughly and above 160 degrees Fahrenheit. Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.



Plants

Though holiday plants account for a small number of poisonings, if you have tots or pets, be careful they don't chew or eat mistletoe berries, holly berries, the fruit of the Jerusalem cherry, boxwood or yew plants. Poinsettias are not toxic, but may cause a stomach ache or vomiting.



Decorations

Lead paint may be present on older tree ornaments. Wash your hands after decorating with these. Tinsel, "icicles" and small tree ornaments are choking hazards to toddlers. "Angel hair" causes skin irritation and is a choking hazard.



If you have questions or concerns, call the toll-free national hotline at **1-800-222-1222** to reach your local poison center. It's free, confidential and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Wishing you happy, healthy holiday season!



The University of Arizona
Health Sciences