

## Mr. Yuk faces off with poisons.

Do you remember the skull and crossbones that once was used to identify dangerous substances? Today, that symbol is not used often to identify harmful substances because many children relate a skull and crossbones to something fun, such as an exciting pirate movie or their favorite amusement park ride. For more than 30 years, the face being used across the country to warn children of poisonous substances is Mr. Yuk.

Mr. Yuk is mean and green, and he was developed at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh to create awareness about poisons and to identify poison center locations and phone numbers. Each Mr. Yuk sticker has the national toll-free telephone number that will connect you to the poison center closest to you.

## Mr. Yuk Needs Your Help!

You are your child's first teacher, and it is very important that your child learns the concept of poison prevention from you. Together with your child, go on a hunt throughout your home and yard to look for potentially poisonous substances. Go into every room and look for products and other substances that may be harmful.

Tell your child that Mr. Yuk would never touch, taste or smell anything that is potentially poisonous. Calmly and firmly tell your child to stay away from the substances you find and to always ask an adult for help before touching or using any product at all. Make sure you put all of the potentially poisonous or harmful products you find out of your child's reach.



## What to do when an accidental poisoning occurs:

- Stop further exposure to the poison.
- If the person has collapsed or stopped breathing, call 911 or your local emergency number immediately.
- Call the poison center right away. The telephone number of the poison center nearest you is printed on every Mr. Yuk sticker in your home. If you don't have a Mr. Yuk sticker, check your local telephone directory. The poison center staff is available 24 hours a day, every day of the year.
- Have the container nearby because you will be asked the name of the substance that was taken, its ingredients, the amount ingested, etc.



- If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, get everyone to fresh air immediately. Call the poison center.
- If a harmful substance is splashed onto the skin, remove the exposed clothing, rinse the skin with large amounts of water and call the poison center.
- If a harmful substance is splashed into the eye(s), remove contact lenses, rinse the affected eye(s) with warm water for 15 minutes and call the poison center.
- When a liquid or solid poison has been swallowed, remove any remaining substance in or around the mouth. Give the person several mouthfuls of water if he/she is awake, alert and able to swallow. Call the poison center.

*This material is intended for instructional or educational purposes only. Any specific questions concerning your child's medical care or condition should be directed to your physician.*

## REMEMBER

Most poisoning exposures do not require treatment in an emergency department. A call to the poison center may be all that is necessary. If it is determined that hospital treatment is necessary, the poison center staff will refer the patient to the closest hospital that is equipped to handle the problem. While the patient is on the way to the hospital, the poison center staff will notify the emergency department and make their recommendation as to the course of treatment to be taken. When the patient arrives in the emergency department, the staff will be ready to treat the poison victim. This way, valuable minutes and lives may be saved.



Use Mr. Yuk to teach your children about poisons and how to contact your poison center.

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# Everyone's Guide to Everyday Poisons





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**DO YOU REALLY KNOW THE PRODUCTS THAT YOU USE IN YOUR HOME EACH DAY?**

Red mouthwash, blue dish detergent, lemon scented furniture polish — each of these common household products is colorful; many of them smell sweet; and all of them can be poisonous if used incorrectly.

When used correctly, household products are safe and useful.

However, children accidentally swallow products such as mouthwash, dish detergent and furniture polish every day. Sometimes these children end up with simple stomach aches; occasionally they

vomit; but some may suffer more serious effects. When adults fail to store household products properly, good products can become dangerous.



Potential poisons are everywhere: in our homes, schools, recreation areas and workplaces. A poison is something that can cause injury, illness or death if you eat, drink or breathe it, or even get it on your skin or in your eyes.

Young children are curious, and things that look or smell good may end up in their mouths. In addition, because a child's sense of smell is not fully developed, what smells bad to an adult may not smell bad to a child.



Accidental poisonings have no boundaries. Whether you are 18 months or 81 years old, you can become a victim of an unintentional poisoning.



## Who gets poisoned and by what?

**MORE THAN HALF OF ALL REPORTED POISONINGS OCCUR IN CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF SIX.**

An estimated 4.7 million poisonings occur each year. Approximately half of all poisonings occur in children less than 6 years of age. Children between 18 months and 3 years old are the most common victims of poisonings, and the exposures occur more frequently in boys than in girls. Many unintentional poisonings occur near mealtimes when children are hungry and adults may not be able to watch them closely because they are busy preparing food.

**More than 50 percent of all reported exposures involve products and substances found in the following categories:**

- Cleaning products
- Pain relievers
- Cosmetic/personal care products
- Plants
- Cough/cold medications
- Bites/stings
- Ointments/creams

Poisons can enter the body in many different ways. Most often, poisons are swallowed or ingested. Poisons also can enter the body through contact with the skin or inhalation. Another way poisons enter the body is through the bite or sting of a venomous creature such as a spider, snake or bee. Poisonings also occur when the eyes are exposed to chemicals.



## Where are poisons hiding in your home?

**IN VIRTUALLY EVERY ROOM IN YOUR HOME THERE ARE PRODUCTS THAT CAN BE HARMFUL TO A CHILD.**

A child sees everything as something to be touched, tasted or smelled.

Survey your home to identify poisons. A good way to conduct the survey is to go through the house on your hands and knees so you can view your home from the perspective of a small child.

As you survey your home, you may find many of the products listed below.

### In the bedroom:

- Perfume, cologne, after shave lotion
- Medicine (pain relievers, vitamins)
- Hairspray
- Make-up (lipstick, eyeliner, etc.)



### In the kitchen:

- Soap and detergent
- Furniture polish
- Carpet cleaner
- Automatic dishwashing detergent
- Drain cleaner
- Ammonia
- Oven cleaner



### In the bathroom:

- Medication (prescription and over-the-counter)
- Mouthwash
- Shaving lotion
- After shave
- Deodorizer/sanitizer
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Shampoo/hair care products
- Hair remover
- Rubbing alcohol
- Fluoride rinse
- Make-up



### In the garage, basement and storage areas:

- Antifreeze
- Motor oil
- Herbicide, pesticide, fertilizer
- Gasoline
- Kerosene
- Paints
- Paint thinner
- Pool supplies



### Throughout the home:

- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- Plants
- Mothballs



*While the above represent the most common products responsible for poisoning exposures, any non-food substance can be harmful to a child. Always keep potentially poisonous products up and out of the reach of children. To help children understand what products are poisonous, read on.*