



Poison Prevention

Newsletter

Summer 2004

 SUNY Upstate Medical University
University Hospital • 750 East Adams Street • Syracuse, NY 13210

Nine of Nine Poison Center Staff Receive Certification

In May 2004, nine Specialists in Poison Information sat for the American Association of Poison Control Center's SPI Certification Exam. All nine of the Central New York Poison Center's SPIs who qualified to sit for the exam, passed, to earn or renew their credentials as **Certified** Poison Information Specialists. As a result, the Poison Center's entire team of specialists is now certified (with the exception of two specialists who will qualify after completion of 2,000 calls/2,000 cases). Don Groff, RN, CPSI, also a Major in the Air National Guard and the Center's WMD/Emergency Coordinator, scored a 100 on the exam (highest score nationally, 106). The Central New York Regional Poison Center is one of the few Center's nationally to have such a high percentage of certified specialist and high rate of retention.

Congratulations to all of our Certified Specialists in Poison Information, helping to make the Central New York Poison Center one of the best in the nation!



Summer Clean Up

Many of you have an ongoing list of summer projects to tackle, from cleaning to home improvement. It is important, when using cleaning and fix-up products, to read the label instructions carefully. Many contain chemicals that can cause poisonings. Use of these products whether used inside or outside, increases your risk of poisoning. Take time to take the precautions necessary to reduce those risks.

Around the pool

Pool chemicals are used to kill bacteria and algae and can be a potential danger when not used properly.

A typical summer call to the Poison Center involves pool chemicals containing chlorine. The fumes from chlorine can cause an immediate reaction ranging from loss of breath to a burning sensation in the nose, throat and eyes. Watery eyes and mild skin irritation are also common when exposed to a high concentration of chlorine.

Prevention tips when using pool chemicals:

- Wear proper protection such as rubber gloves, eye and breathing masks
- Use in a well ventilated area
- Keep out of the reach of children and pets
- Read the product label before using

If you think you have been exposed follow these safety tips:

- Call the poison center 1-800-222-1222
- Remove exposed clothing
- Wash exposed skin with soap and water
- Flush eyes with plain water for 10 to 15 minutes

Pesticides

Pesticides come in the form of sprays, liquids, powders and crystals. Follow these simple guidelines to keep you and your family safe all summer long.

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**Poison emergency?
Poison information?
Call Us!
Visit us on the web:
www.cnypoison.org**

Summer Clean Up

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Read the Label

- Look for the % of the chemical listed as the active ingredients. Products with 10% or greater concentration increase the chance of toxic exposure

Potential Sources of Exposures

- Chemical lawn care treatments
- Weed-killers
- Insect repellents and insect killers
- Pest repellents

Prevention and Protection

- Wear protective clothing such as breathing masks, eye protection, rubber gloves and rubber boots. Be aware that leather and cloth can absorb chemicals so be sure to wear rubber
- Avoid using near water areas – drinking water, pools, and standing water
- Keep away from pets and children

Treatment for exposure

- Call the Poison Center first at 1-800-222-1222
- If in contact with the skin, wash well with soap and water at least twice

Keep Your Pets Safe From Poisons

Remember that during the summer months your pets can be exposed to poisons as easily as you can. Remember these safety tips:

- Clean up product spills as soon as they happen
- Don't let your pets run on lawns that have been treated with chemicals
- Always know the name and types of pesticide or chemical used, just in case your pet is exposed
- Remember to put the lids and caps on all cleaning, home improvement products and pesticides
- Finally, keep pets away from trash and recycle bins when you throw out the containers

Going on vacation? Take us with you

Whether you are going on a day trip or for an extended stay, take the number of the Poison Center with you. Most poisonings are accidents and nobody plans on accidents



happening, but you can be prepared. Program your cell phone with the number of the Poison Center. You can dial **1-800-222-1222** from anywhere in the country and your call will be routed to the closest poison center

(except for cell phones). For an emergency or information, 24 hours a day 7 days a week, we are just a phone call away.

Household Hazardous Waste

Everyday we use common household products for cooking, cleaning, gardening, lawn care and various other uses around the house. We may not consider these products as hazardous waste but many of them are. If you are throwing out leftover or unused household products, please reuse, recycle and dispose of them properly.

Tips for managing your household waste:

- Check with your local solid waste agency for location and collection dates
- Donate paint or leftover products to non-profit organizations or offer to share with neighbors
- Rinse and properly dispose in trash or recycle bins

For more information on Household Hazardous Waste, call the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at 1-800-424-9364 or call your local service.

Use this checklist to review the products you have in your home.

Cleaning Products

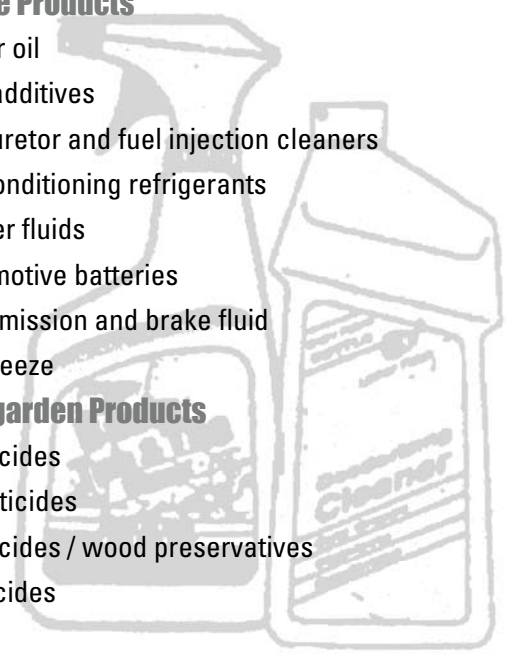
- Drain cleaners
- Wood and metal cleaners and polishes
- Toilet, tile, shower cleaners
- Bleach (laundry)
- Pool chemicals

Automotive Products

- Motor oil
- Fuel additives
- Carburetor and fuel injection cleaners
- Air-conditioning refrigerants
- Starter fluids
- Automotive batteries
- Transmission and brake fluid
- Antifreeze

Lawn and garden Products

- Herbicides
- Insecticides
- Fungicides / wood preservatives
- Pesticides



Caterpillar Stings

Thanks to our friends at **The Blue Ridge Poison Center, VA**, for this great info we want to share with you!

Larvae of moths and butterflies (Order Lepidopterous) are known to most as caterpillars. These worm-like creatures feed on green foliage and fruit and can cause considerable damage (i.e. gypsy moth). Many caterpillars are ornamented with hairs or spines, some of which may sting and irritate when in contact with the skin. Venomous families include saddleback, puss and slug caterpillars. They have hollow hairs through which venom passes. Others, such as the white and buck moth, tussock, and brown-tail only irritate the skin.

Symptoms

Venomous families produce skin symptoms of redness, welts, itching, burning, pain and swelling. Individuals who are allergic may experience an anaphylactic reaction, which can produce life-threatening symptoms.

Inflammation of the eye may occur from airborne hairs or from touching the eyes after handling caterpillars.

Treatment

1. Apply adhesive tape lightly over area of stings to remove broken-off spines.
2. Apply a cold cloth or ice packs to affected area to relieve irritation.
3. Topical steroids (hydrocortisone creams) may provide relief.
4. Any allergic (generalized) reaction calls for medical attention. Signs alerting you to an allergic reaction include shortness of breath, swelling and redness located beyond the area of the sting, generalized itching, hives, weakness, or tingling in the fingers and toes.

Prevention

1. Avoid getting stung when outside. Look before sitting or leaning against a tree
2. Don't handle caterpillars unless you wear gloves that stingers cannot penetrate.
3. Don't ever swallow a caterpillar even on a dare...it could be poisonous! (Actual call at the CNYPCC)

Additional Resources: Goldfrank's Toxicological Emergencies, Micro-medic and Mary Claps, CSPI

Looking to identify a bug you found?

In researching we found resources that may be of interest to you and your children, although we certainly did not review each entry for accuracy related to poisoning. If you have any questions or concerns about poisoning, always call the Poison Center first at 1-800-222-1222.

www.bugguide.net

Quoted directly from the site:

"If you are here to identify something you found, first visit [the guide](#) (listed at the website). If you don't find it there and you have an image of it, you may wish to register and request identification by posting your image in the [ID request](#) section."

www.biokids.umich.edu/critters

We thought this might be a cool summer project for kids!



Poison Center Staff Member Retires After 39 Years

In June, Linda Jutton, RN, CSPI, retired from the Poison Center after 39 years of dedicated service to University Hospital.

At age 16, Linda joined the UH family as a Candy Stripper from 1965-1967, after which she enrolled in Nursing School, graduating in 1969. Upon successful completion of the Nursing Licensure Exam, Linda became a Registered Nurse at University Hospital.

One of Linda's fondest memories of her early years at UH was acting as a nurse's aid on 2A, (at the time, Kidney Transplant and Urology), during UH's first kidney transplant, in 1968. After graduation, she continued working on 2A as a floor nurse from 1969 to 1982. After the birth of her daughter, Tina, Linda worked as a per diem nurse at the hospital from 1982-1989.

In 1989, when Linda was getting ready to retire with 20+ years of service to the hospital, Janette Wood, then nursing supervisor at the Poison Control Center, was successful in convincing Linda that she wasn't yet ready to retire, she just needed a change.

Linda came on board at the Poison Center when it was a small room located behind the old ED nursing station and under supervision of the Pediatric Department, with a staff of 5.

Without much coaching, Linda scored a 93 out of 110, in her first attempt at the American Association of Poison Control Center's Specialist in Toxicology Information Exam in 1996. Seven years later, with more telephone management experience, training coursework, and guidance from Center manager, Michele Caliva, RN, CSPI, Center toxicologist, Dr. Christine Stork, and medical direction of Dr. Richie Cantor, Linda scored the high-

est grade achieved with a 105, of 109.

Linda has seen many changes over the years at the Center.

The now, state designated and AAPCC certified Central New York

Regional Poison Center, is under the auspices of the Emergency Department and located off-site at 550 E. Genesee St. The Center has evolved to include a staff of 30, with a Medical Director, Administrative Director, toxicologists, toxicology fellow, education director, health educator, secretary, 20 Specialists in Poison Information with a newly identified WMD Coordinator.

As she retires Linda looks forward to relaxing at home with husband Bob and her favorite cats. When asked, Linda stated that she will miss working on the phones, calming the fears of nervous moms, but especially will miss the camaraderie of her friends at the Poison Center.

We will miss you Linda and we all wish you the very best in your retirement!

