		Upstate New York Poison Center
1-800-222-1222		
www.upstatepoison.org		

Poison Prevention

Newsletter

October 2015

UPSTATE
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

750 East Adams Street • Syracuse, NY 13210

Heroin and Synthetic Marijuana Use on the Rise

In follow up to the front page article in our June Newsletter on Synthetic Marijuana (http://upstate.edu/poison/pdf/pp_newsletter/2015/june_2015.pdf) exposure calls to the Upstate Poison Center about this man-made drug has reached an all time high. From our 54 county service area the center has logged 504 in the first eight months of 2015, surpassing the entire year's total of 273 in of 2012. Onondaga County ranks first in call volume with 287 of the 504 calls. Exposure calls fell sharply in 2013 to 53 before beginning to climb again in 2014.

As to heroin calls, the Poison Center received a total of 329 in 2014. Ninety-five of those calls were logged from Onondaga County. In the first eight months of this year, 68 of the total 207 heroin exposure calls originated in Onondaga County.

Exposure calls to Upstate New York Poison Center about synthetic marijuana and heroin generally originate in a health care facility and demonstrate only a fraction of number of those actually using synthetic marijuana and heroin in our region.

SNADDs

Sharps/Needles
AND Drugs
Disposal
Pilot Program

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Like so many throughout the nation, our local communities are facing an opioid and heroin epidemic. In an effort to reduce availability and accessibility of these and other dangerous drugs, community options for safe drug disposal are one viable component of a multi-pronged approach to reducing drug abuse.

It is indeed good news that with encouragement from NYS Senator Charles Schumer and other prominent Senators, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is reinstating its semi-annual Drug Take Back days. However, with the dramatic increase in the total number of prescription drugs written last year alone (4 billion), complementary options must be established for safe drug disposal during the 5-month intervals between collection days.

Therefore with several program partners in Onondaga County, the SNADD program is being initiated to establish a new system for proper disposal of both drugs as well as hypodermic needles and other sharps such as lancets used to test for blood sugar levels.

As a complement to the DEA (semi-annual) Drug Take Back events, the SNADD program (Sharps, Needles and Drug Disposal) will provide the general public the means to dispose of unwanted, expired drugs found in their homes, including narcotics, on an on-going basis. Drug Drop Boxes are now installed at 9 local law enforcement agencies in Onondaga County. These drop boxes are available to the general public during the law enforcement agency's regular business hours. The

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Drug Interactions Can Increase with Age

As you age you may find you are treating more health conditions with medication. Be aware that with increased use of medicines and normal body changes caused by aging comes the risk of harmful drug interactions. The more you know about your medicines and the more you talk with your health care professionals, the easier it is to avoid problems with medicines. Therefore, it's important to know about drug interactions.

- **Drug-drug interactions** happen when two or more medicines react with each other to cause unwanted effects. This kind of interaction can also cause one medicine to not work as well or even make one medicine stronger than it should be. For example, you should not take aspirin if you are taking a prescription blood thinner, such as warfarin, unless your health care professional tells you to.
- **Drug-condition interactions** happen when a medical condition you already have makes certain drugs potentially harmful. For example, if you have high blood pressure or asthma, you could

have an unwanted reaction if you take a nasal decongestant.

- **Drug-food interactions** result from drugs reacting with foods or drinks. In some cases, food in the digestive tract can affect how a drug is absorbed. Some medicines also may affect the way nutrients are absorbed or used in the body.
- **Drug-alcohol interactions** can happen when the medicine you take reacts with an alcoholic drink. For instance, mixing alcohol with some medicines may cause you to feel tired and slow your reactions.

It is important to know that many medicines do not mix well with alcohol. As you grow older, your body may react differently to alcohol, as well as to the mix of alcohol and medicines. Keep in mind that some problems you might think are medicine-related, such as loss of coordination, memory loss, or irritability, could be the result of a mix between your medicine and alcohol.

US. Food and Drug Administration. "As You Age: You and Your Medicine". Protecting and Promoting Your Health. Page Last Updated: 06/23/2015. Website: accessed 8.30.15.



DID YOU KNOW...

In the 19th century, Mercury was used in manufacturing felt hats. Unfortunately, it caused a high rate of mercury poisoning in those who worked with it. Mercury poisoning causes neurological damage, including slurred speech, memory loss, and tremors, which led to the phrase "mad as a hatter".

Myers, Richard (2003). The Basics of Chemistry. Greenwood Publishing Group. ISBN 978-0313316647.



Back to School Safety

The sound of school buses marks an exciting time as parents prepare their children for the fall term. The transition between summer vacation and back to school takes time and careful thought. The same is true for transitioning your child back into the routine of the classroom. Many proper habits previously honed are long forgotten.

The Upstate New York Poison Center reminds parents, grandparents, child caregivers and children: Take time to prevent poisonings!

The following tips may help you prevent a poisoning before it can happen:

SILICA GEL CRYSTAL PACKETS

First order of business! Throw away each and every packet of silica gel crystals that came with each new pair of shoes or backpack. Although non-toxic, they can pose a choking hazard to children. Teach your kids to toss the packets in the trash without even opening them.

HAND SANITIZERS

Hand sanitizers can lead to poisonings and should not be included in a young child's backpack. If using it in the classroom or at home, teach children that less than a dime-sized amount of sanitizer is adequate to clean hands. Hands should be rubbed together until dry. Hand washing with soap and hot water is still the most effective method to remove dirt and germs.

SNADDs

new SNADD program will also provide the opportunity for people to get rid of the needles they have used for at-home medical care as well, which are not presently allowed for collection at the DEA Take Back events.

The Sharps, Needles and Drug Disposal pilot project is realized through the collaborative efforts of: the Onondaga County District Attorney's Office, the Onondaga County Sheriff's Office, the Onondaga County Health Department, Upstate New York Poison Center, Covanta, OCRRA, REACH CNY and the Prevention Network.

This present pilot program encompasses 9 participating police departments in Onondaga County. The program will be ongoing throughout the year. With successful outcomes

LUNCH BOXES

It is most important to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold to prevent food poisoning so be sure to pack appropriate lunch items that will not spoil in a lunch box. Washing fruit and vegetables beforehand helps remove dirt, bacteria and pesticides. Encourage children to wash their hands every time before enjoying their lunches.

MEDICATION

Talk to children about proper use of medication.

Gummi-vitamins can be a real enticement to children, even in middle grades. First check with your health care provider to determine IF your child should take any multi-vitamin. Know that should you choose to give a gummi-vitamin, children often treat them as candy because they taste sweet, even when they know better. Best to keep them UP and out of the reach of children.



Carefully read and follow directions and warnings on all labels before taking or giving medicine. Help your children learn by setting a good example.

Teach your children to never take other people's medicine.

Remember: In a poison emergency or for poison prevention information **call the Upstate New York Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222!**

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the goal will be to have every PD in the county equipped with a Drug Drop Box and a needle disposal receptacle by year's end.

The law enforcement agencies in the pilot program include: Baldwinsville, Camillus, Cicero, Dewitt, Manlius, Marcellus and the Sheriff's Office downtown headquarters as well as at both the North Station in Liverpool, and the South Station on Onondaga Hill.

Each PD site will have one drug drop box to collect drugs, including narcotics and a separate receptacle to collect hypodermic needles and other sharps in accordance with NYS and federal laws. One more community response to help fight our opioid epidemic.

Program your cell phone 1-800-222-1222



You just may save a life!

A Poisoning Can Happen to **You!**

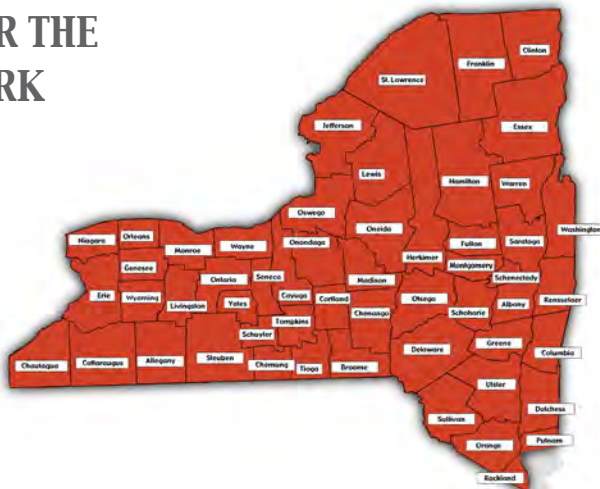


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SERVICE AREA FOR THE
UPSTATE NEW YORK
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**Unintentional
Poisoning Can
Happen To You...
At Any Age!**

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