



Medication Safety During the Holidays For Older Adults!

Holidays are a time for celebration, cherished moments with loved ones, and creating special memories. However, the hustle and bustle of hosting family and friends can disrupt routines, making it easier for older adults to become confused about their medications.

To help everyone stay safe during the holiday season, here are some important tips to ensure medication safety:

1. Always read and follow the instructions on the label for all medicines.
2. Keep all medicines in their original container. If you choose to use a pill organizer, be sure to store it up and away. Consider using a medication lock

box while company is visiting or traveling.

3. Keep medicine up, out of sight and reach of children and pets who might be visiting.

4. When taking your medicine, avoid dropping a pill on the floor by taking it over a sink or countertop. Put all medicine away after each use.

5. Never share prescription medicine, or take someone else's prescription medicine.

6. Don't tell children medicine is candy; it makes them want to take it when you are not looking.

7. When a medicine is stopped, safely remove any extra from your home. There are several ways to dispose of medications properly:

a. Drop-off during the DEA's National Prescription Drug Take Back Day (visit www.DEA.gov/takebackday for locations and times).

b. Drop at a drug disposal box/kiosk (most pharmacies have these).

c. Use an at-home drug disposal kit (e.g.: Deterra®).

d. If none of these options are available, mix the medicine with coffee grounds and then throw the mix in the trash.

**Add our number, 1-800-222-1222, to your list of
important phone numbers.**

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Carbon Monoxide – The Silent Killer, But It Doesn't Need To Be!



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As the weather gets colder, please be mindful of potential exposures to carbon monoxide (CO). This odorless, colorless gas can be produced by any appliance, grill, or motor that burns natural gas, wood, charcoal, kerosene, or gasoline. Symptoms of toxicity may include headache, weakness, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, and/or loss of consciousness. Severe poisoning can cause seizures, coma, long-term disability, or death.

Several household and outdoor appliances/devices can generate carbon monoxide if not operating properly or if used in an enclosed space:

- Furnace
- Gas oven/stovetop
- Fireplace
- Chimney

- Clothes dryer
- Grills (charcoal, wood pellet, or propane)
- Portable heaters
- Portable generators
- Idling cars, trucks, tractors, boats, or other engine-powered equipment

Tips to Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning:

- All homes should have at least one (preferably several) working CO detector. If battery-operated, change the batteries every six months and check expiration dates.
- If you use a generator when the power goes out, do not use it inside your home, porch, or garage. Place it at least twenty feet from the house, and away from any open windows.
- Make sure your chimney and flues are working properly.
- Do not heat your house with a gas stove, or gas dryer.
- Be sure exterior dryer vents are clear of snow/debris and clear snow near your car's exhaust.
- Do not run a car or truck inside the garage (even if the garage door is open)
- Do not run lawn mowers or snow blowers in your garage/enclosed spaces.

If Your Carbon Monoxide Alarm Does Go Off:

- Leave the house, business, school, garage, vehicle, or RV immediately; get outside and get fresh air.
- Call for help (911, Fire Department, Gas company, qualified maintenance teams equipped with electronic sensors). Do not return inside until you're given all clear by emergency personnel or certified contractors.
- Don't use the faulty or improperly vented appliance again until it's fixed.
- After exposure, your cognitive abilities may be impaired. Have someone immediately drive you to the nearest medical facility. Carbon monoxide poisoning tests are time-sensitive (2.5-4 hours, ideally < 2 hours), and knowing your exposure level is important for a plan of care.

For more information, contact the Upstate New York Poison Center (24/7/365) at 1-800-222-1222 or visit www.upstatepoison.org.

Upcoming Health Educator Webinar

Register



The Upstate New York Poison Center in collaboration with the National Carbon Monoxide Awareness Association presents the Health Education Webinar Series:

CO is a Silent Killer, But it Doesn't Need To Be: A Personal Story of Survival and Prevention Tips

Presented by:

Charon McNabb

National Carbon Monoxide Awareness Association

and

Amy Hoffman-James

UNYPC Public Health Educator

January 16, 2025

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Questions: HoffmAmy@upstate.edu

Participants will:

- Learn about low-level carbon monoxide poisoning and how to protect yourself and your community.
- Identify the six pitfalls of carbon monoxide detection, research, and data.
- Develop effective and focused carbon monoxide safety strategies that can be put to use to protect your community.
- Learn about resources from the Upstate New York Poison Center & National CO Awareness Association.

Please register: <https://bit.ly/3UORWoc>

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CO Brochure

New brochure on carbon monoxide poisoning.



Nicotine Pouch Concerns

Learn possible dangers of nicotine pouches & teens.

SAVE OUR NUMBER NOW: 1-800-222-1222

- We are open 24/7/365.
- We are free and confidential.
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- We offer community education and professional education.
- Visit us at www.upstatepoison.org.



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