

UPSTATE NEW YORK
POISON CENTER

September 2024 Newsletter



Time for Back to School!

The transition between summer vacation and the back-to-school routine can seem overwhelming. The Upstate New York Poison Center reminds parents, grandparents, caregivers, and students to remember these safety tips:

Hand Sanitizers: Drinking hand sanitizers can lead to poisoning. If using it in the classroom or at home, or if you are including it in a child's backpack, teach children 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.

Medication: Talk to your child about the proper use of medication, and review their school's medication policy together. Always read and follow medication labels carefully. Set a good example by handling medicine responsibly. Teach your child to never touch or consume any pills they find and to alert an adult immediately. Explain the dangers of all medications, and consider using a lock box. Remind them never to take medicine meant for someone else.

Vaping: Most teens believe e-cigarettes are harmless and only contain flavor. However, e-cigarettes can contain nicotine (a highly addictive drug), CBD, or cannabis. Even non-nicotine vape pens are harmful. Teens are using stealth e-cigarette products that can be hidden in and/or look like backpacks, sweatshirts, smartwatches, pens, fidget spinners, keychain lights, flash drives, fake AirPods, or gaming devices. Teen brains are still developing. Vaping may negatively affect a teen's attention, learning, and memory by promoting addiction to nicotine. They may also experience coughing, wheezing, vomiting, headaches, and dizziness.

Social Media Dares/Pranks/Trends: Students daring each other to do things they shouldn't is not a new phenomenon. However, many dares are amplified by social media. It is important to have ongoing conversations with students about the dangers associated with the latest social media trends, especially those involving medication, alcohol, or other potentially dangerous chemicals.

Caffeine and Energy Drinks: For many students, mornings can be a struggle, making it tempting to rely on caffeine to jumpstart their day, stay up late studying, or power through after-school activities. Energy drinks contain large amounts of caffeine and other stimulants and can have negative side effects (nausea, insomnia, headaches, and rapid heartbeats), and large enough doses can even be life-threatening. Talk to students about healthier choices.

Boxed Lunch: It is important to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold to prevent food poisoning. Be sure to pack appropriate lunch items that will not spoil in a lunch box. When packing leftovers for lunch, make sure they are no more than three days old and check expiration dates on food items to avoid eating harmful bacteria. Washing fruit and vegetables beforehand helps remove dirt, bacteria, and pesticides. Encourage children to wash their hands before and after they eat.

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

Back-To-School Resources

To help the transition of back-to-school, [our website](#) offers educational information on many topics of interest around poison safety. We have webinars, videos, guides, handouts, and flyers available for your use in poison prevention with all ages, such as:

- **Vaping** - webinar, educational videos and handouts for teens and parents.
- **Cannabis** - multiple webinars, look-alike poster and tip card.
- **Teacher's Guide** - 62 pages including lesson plans for all age groups with activity sheets ready to print.
- **"Is it Candy or Medicine" poster and flyer.**
- **Brochures** on Medication Safety, Poison Safety Information, Poisonous Plants, Carbon Monoxide, Senior Safety and more...
- **Look-alike flip chart** – matching sets of products, one poison and one food that can be confusing to any age group.
- **"Stop! Ask First" video** – for Preschool – Grade 2 featuring our poison safety heroes, Mellie and Zipper, and a catchy tune children love to sing!



Upcoming Health Educator Webinar

In recognition of Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, the Upstate New York Poison Center is partnering with the Suicide Prevention Center of NY to offer our next Health Educator's webinar:

“Suicide by Poisoning, Current Data, Prevention Strategies and How You Can Help”

Register Here



Office of
Mental Health

UPSTATE NEW YORK
POISON CENTER



In recognition of Suicide Awareness Month, the Suicide Prevention Center of NY, part of NYS Office of Mental Health, and the Upstate New York Poison Center present:

Suicide by Poisoning: Current Data, Prevention Strategies, and How You Can Help

Presented by

Garra Lloyd Lester, Coordinator,
Community and Coalition Initiatives,
Suicide Prevention Center of New York,
Office of Mental Health

Mary Beth Dreyer, MSED
UNYPC Health Education Program
Manager

September 12, 2024

1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Questions: dreyerm@upstate.edu

Participants will:

- Review current New York State Poison Center data on intentional poisonings.
- Discuss lethal means safety and harm reduction strategies to reduce the number of poisoning suicides.
- Learn about resources from the Suicide Prevention Center of NY and the Upstate New York Poison Center.

Please register: <https://bit.ly/4f1AcJz>



In July, we welcomed a new Public Health Educator to our team! Emilie Felicia earned her BA in Biological Sciences from Binghamton University and finished her MPH at Upstate Medical University this August. Emilie was originally interested in pursuing medicine, but her experience as a medical scribe and training as an EMT helped her discover her passion for public health and helping others differently. Having grown up in Central New York, she is excited to be a part of the Upstate team. She is looking forward to helping build community partnerships and expanding education outreach efforts to counties located in the North Country, Mohawk Valley, Capital District, and Hudson Valley regions.

Reach out to Emilie at feliciae@upstate.edu or call [\(315\) 476-4766](tel:3154764766).



Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated from September 15th to October 15th. Our center honors Hispanic and Latin cultures in our 54-county region. Check out these printable materials to share at your family or community celebrations:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9ktrXJwYYQ> (Courtesy: Northern New England Poison Center)

<https://www.upstate.edu/poison/pdf/spanish-brochure.pdf>

<https://www.upstate.edu/poison/pdf/activity-sheets-in-spanish.pdf>

Other materials in Spanish may also be requested by visiting www.upstatepoison.org or by calling [315-464-7078](tel:315-464-7078).

FREE Materials

We are always adding to our FREE resources and materials. Click and see below for the new materials just added at no cost to you.

Head to our [website](#) now to request these plus stickers, magnets, brochures, etc. We also have printable activity sheets for children, videos to enhance your presentations, free teacher training, and new look-alike product photos for you to share.



**Senior-Focused
Poison Safety
Pamphlet**



**Medication Safety
Brochure For All Ages**



**Vaping Guide for
Parents and Teens
(double-sided)**



**Candy vs. Medicine
Look-Alike Poster**

Would you like us to write a letter for your newsletter? Contact us. Guest on a podcast? Contact us. Do you coordinate your social media and need poison prevention information? Contact us. Our Public Health Educators will be happy to help!

We invite you to contact Mary Beth Dreyer at DreyerM@upstate.edu or Amy Hoffman-James at HoffmAmy@upstate.edu.

Save our number now: **1-800-222-1222**

- We are open 24/7/365
- We are free & confidential
- Specially trained Nurses, Pharmacists & Physicians answer your calls
- We offer community education and professional education
- Visit us at www.upstatepoison.org



Upstate New York Poison Center

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New York

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Questions? Email DreyerM@upstate.edu

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