

# Protecting Yourself and Your Family Against Poisonings

*[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC—safer, healthier people.*

[Dr. Len Paulozzi] People of all ages—adults and children alike—are at risk for unintentional poisonings. In 2005, more than 23,600 deaths in the United States were a result of unintentional poisoning. Almost all of them were drug-related.

You can help protect yourself and those you care about. There are several safety tips you can keep in mind to minimize your own, and your loved ones', risk of being unintentionally poisoned. The following tips are adapted from the American Association of Poison Control Centers and other sources.

To help keep children safe from unintentional poisonings:

- Always keep medicines out of reach of young children. Don't leave doses of medications on countertops—or anywhere that children can easily reach them.
- Don't take your medications in front of kids. Kids often copy adult behaviors.
- Keep medicines and chemical products in their original containers.
- Keep household products and poisonous plants out of children's reach.
- Return products to childproof cabinets when you finish with them.

To prevent drug overdoses among teens and adults:

- Don't use drugs recreationally.
- Don't take drugs prescribed to others.
- Dispose of prescription drugs you don't need so that other members of your household don't use them.
- Don't ever mix strong painkillers or sedating drugs with alcohol, and
- Follow directions on labels when you give and take medications.

When cleaning your home:

- Never mix household products together. Ammonia and bleach, for example, create a poisonous gas when combined.
- When using household cleaners and chemicals, turn on fans and open windows to help ventilate the area.

If someone *is* poisoned:

- Call 9-1-1 right away if you have an emergency, or if someone has collapsed or is not breathing.
- You should also know how to reach a poison control center. You can call 1-800-222-1222, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Put this number near every phone in your home, and program it into your cell phone.

These are just a few tips that can help prevent unintentional poisonings. Please visit [www.cdc.gov/injury](http://www.cdc.gov/injury) for more information about poisonings and how you can prevent them.

*[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.*