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What You Need To Know About Poison

By Caitlin Bootsma

If there's one thing I hope you take away from this article it is this: don't hesitate to call the Poison Control hotline at 1-800-222-1222. In fact, now is probably a good time to add that phone number right into your phone contact list—because you never know when you're really going to need it. Experts respond immediately to your situation and can tell you the best way to treat you or the child. Although, if someone is having a seizure or having trouble waking up or breathing, call 911. Otherwise, if you have a question about something that has been ingested or accessed, Poison Control can steer you in the right direction.

It will probably end up happening to all caretakers at some point—you're afraid you gave a child too much of a medication or the wrong one; a child got into medicine or cleaning supplies that weren't fully closed; or they swallowed something they should not have.

While mistakes or accidents can happen, this is the perfect time to do what you can to prevent these sorts of incidents.

Here's a few questions to ask yourself and then address as needed:

- Are all medicines and vitamins in the house in child proof containers? Are they put away in a place that is not easy for children to access?
- Batteries are extremely dangerous when ingested. Are batteries in your house in a secure place? Have all batteries in toys been secured so that kids can't get to them? Are there any loose screws?
- Do you have working carbon monoxide monitors? Are your fuel burning appliances in good shape? Do you keep gasoline-powered tools only outside the house? Are portable gas containers out of reach?
- Where do you keep cleaning supplies? Are they far from where kids could access them unsupervised?



- Scan your home. Are there other substances that could pose a danger to your kids? (e.g., e-cigarettes, hand sanitizer, dishwasher pods, etc.).

This is also a great time to explain (or re-explain) about dangerous substances to your kids. Even the littlest of kids can understand "danger" and older kids may need reminding not to leave substances out where the younger kids can get to them. You can also discuss the dangers of ingesting chemicals and harmful substances with older children and teenagers.

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What is Your Opinion?

What are your plans for Palm Sunday as you prepare for Easter?

- To attend Mass in some form.
- Experience the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Pray the Rosary.
- Participate in a Stations of the Cross prayer service in some way.
- I'm not sure.

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