



WINTER HOLIDAY POISON PREVENTION AND SAFETY TIPS

Do You Know ...

The winter Holiday Season is a time for celebration, but also a time when accidental poisonings can occur. The categories of potential accidental poisonings are intended to be your guide to keep your holidays safe.

If you suspect an accidental poisoning, call your regional poison center hotline immediately: **1-800-222-1222**

Find more poisoning prevention information, tips and your regional poison control center at the American Association of Poison Control Centers, <http://www.1-800-222-1222.info/> (not a U.S. government Web site).

Seasonal Plants

Some of the common holiday plants, such as the poinsettia and mistletoe have often been considered very poisonous, even life-threatening. Although caution should be exercised, ingestion of these plants is not fatal.

If you suspect plant ingestion, **call your regional poison center hotline immediately: 1-800-222-1222.**

Do not make someone vomit unless instructed to do so by the Poison Control Center.

Decorations

Careful handling and extra caution should be used with some holiday decorations, including:

- **angel hair**: avoid skin and eye contact
- **bubble lights**
- **candles**
- **Christmas tree ornaments**
- **Christmas tree preservatives**
- **snow sprays**: be sure to have the room well ventilated when you spray snow sprays in your home.
- **fire place colored crystals**: keep crystals away from children

If you suspect a toxic effect from these decorations, **call your regional poison center hotline immediately: 1-800-222-1222.**

Gifts

Wrapping paper, batteries and snow scene globes require caution around infants and small children. The foil and colored gift wrap may contain lead. Batteries, if leaking, can cause serious burns and the water in the snow globes may be contaminated with harmful bacteria.

If you suspect an encounter with a poisoning from seasonal gift wrapping, **call your regional poison center hotline immediately: 1-800-222-1222.**

Parties

Exercise caution when children are present. Cigarette butts and cigars left unattended can be chewed by children, resulting in nicotine poisoning.

Always discard partial glasses of alcoholic drinks so children will not be tempted to drink them. Take care when baking: extracts, such as vanilla and almond, contain alcohol.

If you suspect a child has ingested alcohol **call your regional poison center hotline immediately: 1-800-222-1222.**

Food Safety Tips

Washing your hands and cleaning the food preparation area and cooking utensils are the most important things you can do to prevent food poisoning.

Also, if food is kept at room temperature for 2 hours or longer, bacteria can multiply. Leftover turkey can be safely **refrigerated for 3 to 5 days, but gravy and stuffing should be eaten in 1 or 2 days.**

If you suspect food poisoning, **call your regional poison center hotline immediately: 1-800-222-1222.**

Holiday Visitors with Medications

Visitors may carry their medications and cosmetics in purses and suitcases. Children's natural curiosity can create a dangerous situation. Offer guests a locked cabinet for their medications. Also, be mindful that the homes of friends and relatives may not be poison-proof, particularly if children do not usually live there.

If you suspect an accidental poisoning, **call your regional poison center hotline immediately: 1-800-222-1222.**

Thanks to HRSA grantees for the information on this page: California Poison Control System, Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center (Colorado), Regional Center for Poison Control (Massachusetts) and Virginia Poison Center.