Poison control centers (poison centers) are an excellent starting point in the event of a pesticide mishap. The specially trained nurses, pharmacists, and physicians who staff these 24-hour emergency telephone services assess the severity of the pesticide exposure, make treatment recommendations, and often provide valuable information for spill containment and cleanup. When hospital treatment is required, the poison center contacts the receiving hospital and provides the emergency department with the most current treatment information available. During large-scale pesticide accidents (hazardous material incidents) many poison centers assist first responders with selection of proper protective gear, determination of proper decontamination techniques, and development of triage guidelines for victims.

There is no charge for using a poison center. Usually state, county, or city taxes support this public service. In some states private hospitals or industries sponsor the program.

Access to poison control centers varies across the United States. A current list of centers and their telephone numbers accompanies this section. When in doubt, readers should consult the front of their telephone book for the number of their poison control center or should contact their local telephone information operator. There is no single poison center designated for the United States. Instead, a regional network of poison centers exists. The advantage of this arrangement is that local poison centers know the capabilities of hospitals and first response crews in their region and are better able to guide poison victim treatment. When changes occur within the service region, such as a hospital closure, the local poison center is quickly able to adapt to the change.

Not all poison centers are equal. Thirty-six US poison centers have been credentialed as regional poison centers by the American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC). In order to be designated as a regional poison center by AAPCC, the center must meet criteria regarding accessibility, population base, staff, qualifications, medical direction, public and professional outreach, protocol development, knowledge of service area capabilities, and data collection. In general, AAPCC regional poison centers serve larger population bases, have larger call volumes, and access more extensive information resources than nonregional centers. Not surprisingly, several studies suggest that AAPCC regional centers handle calls more proficiently than nonregional poison centers.

Calling a poison center during a pesticide mishap will further broaden our understanding of pesticide toxicology. Most poison centers in the United States contribute their case experience to the Toxic Environmental Surveillance System (TESS), a national poisoning database developed and maintained by the American Association of Poison Control Centers. Each year, the American Journal of Emergency Medicine publishes an abstracted version of the TESS data so that the entire medical community can learn more about poisoning trends. With over 1.5 million poisonings being recorded on an annual basis, it is possible to use the data to precisely target poison prevention efforts, optimize treatments for specific poisonings, and identify problematic drugs, pesticides, and household products. In a sense, each poison center caller contributes to improved care for the next caller.

For Additional Information


Editors

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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF POISON CONTROL CENTERS
Certified Regional Poison Centers

ALABAMA

Regional Poison Control Center
The Children’s Hospital of Alabama
1600 7th Ave. S
Birmingham, AL 35233-1711
Emergency Phones: (205) 939-9201
   (800) 292-678 (AL only)
   (205) 933-4050

University of California, Davis, Medical Center
Regional Poison Control Center
2315 Stockton Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95817
Emergency Phones: (916) 734-3692
   (800) 342-9293 (Northern CA only)

COLORADO

Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center
645 Bannock St.
Denver, CO 80204
Emergency Phone: (303) 629-1123

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

National Capital Poison Center
Georgetown University Hospital
3800 Reservoir Rd., NW
Washington, DC 20007
Emergency Phones: (202) 625-3333
   (202) 784-4660 (TTY)

FLORIDA

The Florida Poison Information Center at Tampa
General Hospital Post
Box 1289
Tampa, FL 33601
Emergency Phones: (813) 253-4444 (Tampa)
   (800) 282-3171 (Florida)

GEORGIA

Georgia Poison Center
Grady Memorial Hospital
80 Butler St. SE
Box 26066
Atlanta, GA 30335-3801
Emergency Phones: (800) 282-5846 (GA only)
   (404) 616-9000

INDIANA

Indiana Poison Center
Methodist Hospital of Indiana
1701 N. Senate Blvd.
Box 1367
Indianapolis, IN 46206-1367
Emergency Phones: (800) 382-9097 (IN only)
   (317) 929-2323
MARYLAND

Maryland Poison Center
20 N. Pine St.
Baltimore, MD 21201
Emergency Phones: (410) 528-7701
(800) 492-2414 (MD only)

National Capital Poison Center (DC suburbs only)
Georgetown University Hospital
3800 Reservoir Rd., NW
Washington, DC 20007
Emergency Phones: (202) 625-3333
(202) 784-4660 (TTY)

MASSACHUSETTS

Massachusetts Poison Control System
300 Longwood Ave.
Boston, MA 02115
Emergency Phones: (617) 232-2120
(800) 682-9211

MICHIGAN

Blodgett Regional Poison Center
1840 Wealthy, SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506-2968
Emergency Phones: (800) 632-2727 (MI only)
(800) 356-3232 (TTY)

Poison Control Center
Children’s Hospital of Michigan
3901 Beaubien Blvd.
Detroit, MI 48201
Emergency Phone: (313) 745-5711

MINNESOTA

Hennepin Regional Poison Center
Hennepin County Medical Center
701 Park Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55415
Emergency Phones: (612) 347-3141
Petline: (612) 337-7387
(612) 337-7474 (TDD)

Minnesota Regional Poison Center
St. Paul-Ramsey Medical Center
640 Jackson St.
St. Paul, MN 55101
Emergency Phone: (612) 221-2113

MISSOURI

Cardinal Glennon Children’s Hospital
Regional Poison Center
1465 S. Grand Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63104
Emergency Phones: (314) 772-5200
(800) 366-8888

MONTANA

Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center
645 Bannock St.
Denver, CO 80204
Emergency Phone: (303) 629-1123

NEBRASKA

Blaine (Jess) Benson
The Poison Center
Childrens Hospital
Omaha, NE 68114
Emergency Phones: (402) 390-5555 (Omaha)
(800) 955-9119 (NE)

NEW JERSEY

New Jersey Poison Information and Education System
201 Lyons Ave.
Newark, NJ 07112
Emergency Phone: (800) 962-1253

NEW MEXICO

New Mexico Poison and Drug Information Center
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, NM 87131-1076
Emergency Phones: (505) 843-2551
(800) 432-6866 (NM only)

NEW YORK

Hudson Valley Poison Center
Nyack Hospital
160 N. Midland Ave.
Nyack, NY 10960
Emergency Phones: (800) 336-6997
(914) 353-1000

Long Island Regional Poison Control Center
Winthrop University Hospital
259 First St.
Mineola, NY 11501
Emergency Phones: (516) 542-2323, 2324, 2325, 3813
New York City Poison Control Center  
N.Y.C. Dept. of Health  
455 First Ave., Rm. 123  
New York, NY 10016  
Emergency Phones: (212) 340-4494  
(212) P-O-I-S-O-N-S  
(212) 689-9014 (TDD)

TEXAS

North Texas Poison Center  
5201 Harry Hines Blvd.  
Box 35926  
Dallas, TX 75235  
Emergency Phones: (214) 590-5000,  
(800) 441-0040 (Texas Watts)

Texas State Poison Center  
The University of Texas Medical Branch  
Galveston, TX 77550-2780  
Emergency Phones: (409) 765-1420 (Galveston)  
(713) 654-1701 (Houston)

OHIO

Central Ohio Poison Center  
700 Children’s Dr.  
Columbus, OH 43205-2696  
Emergency Phones: (614) 228-1323  
(800) 682-7625  
(614) 228-2272 (TrY)  
(614) 461-2012

Cincinnati Drug and Poison Information Center  
and Regional Poison Control System  
231 Bethesda Ave., M. L. 144  
Cincinnati, OH 45267-0144  
Emergency Phones: (513) 558-5111  
(800) 872-5111 (OH only)

OREGON

Oregon Poison Center  
Oregon Health Sciences University  
3181 S. W. Sam Jackson Park Rd.  
Portland, OR 97201  
Emergency Phones: (503) 494-8968  
(800) 452-7165 (OR only)

UTAH

Utah Poison Control Center  
410 Chipeta Way, Suite 230  
Salt Lake City, UT 84108  
Emergency Phones: (801) 581-2151  
(800) 456-7707 (UT only)

VIRGINIA

Blue Ridge Poison Center  
Box 67  
Blue Ridge Hospital  
Charlottesville, VA 22901  
Emergency Phones: (804) 924-5543  
(800) 451-1428

National Capital Poison Center (Northern VA only)  
Georgetown University Hospital  
3800 Reservoir Rd., N. W.  
Washington, DC 20007  
Emergency Phones: (202) 625-3333  
(202) 784-4660 (TrY)

WEST VIRGINIA

West Virginia Poison Center  
3110 MacCorkle Ave. S. E.  
Charleston, WV 25304  
Emergency Phones: (800) 642-3625 (WV only)  
(304) 348-4211

RHODE ISLAND

Rhode Island Poison Center  
593 Eddy St.  
Providence, RI 02903  
Emergency Phone: (401) 277-5727

WYOMING

The Poison Center  
8301 Dodge St.  
Omaha, NE 68114  
Emergency Phones: (402) 390-5555 (Omaha)  
(800) 955-9119 (NE)