



[Home](#) → [Health Topics](#) → Poisoning

URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/poisoning.html>

Poisoning

A poison is any substance that is harmful to your body. You might swallow it, inhale it, inject it, or absorb it through your skin. Any substance can be poisonous if too much is taken. Poisons can include:

- Prescription or over-the-counter medicines taken in doses that are too high
- Overdoses of illegal drugs
- Carbon monoxide [<https://medlineplus.gov/carbonmonoxidepoisoning.html>] from gas appliances
- Household products [<https://medlineplus.gov/householdproducts.html>] , such as laundry powder or furniture polish
- Pesticides [<https://medlineplus.gov/pesticides.html>]
- Indoor or outdoor plants
- Metals such as lead [<https://medlineplus.gov/leadpoisoning.html>] and mercury [<https://medlineplus.gov/mercury.html>]

The effects of poisoning range from short-term illness to brain damage, coma, and death. To prevent poisoning it is important to use and store products exactly as their labels say. Keep dangerous products where children can't get to them. Treatment for poisoning depends on the type of poison. If you suspect someone has been poisoned, call your local poison control center at **1-800-222-1222** right away.

Start Here

- Overview of Poisoning [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/injuries-and-poisoning/poisoning/overview-of-poisoning>] (Merck & Co., Inc.)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/es-us/hogar/traumatismos-y-envenenamientos/intoxicaciones-o-envenenamientos/introducci%C3%B3n-a-las-intoxicaciones-o-envenenamientos>]
- Poisoning [<https://familydoctor.org/condition/poisoning/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/condicion/envenenamiento-es/?adfree=true>]
- Poisoning: First Aid [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid/first-aid-poisoning/basics/ART-20056657?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/first-aid/first-aid-poisoning/basics/art-20056657?p=1>]

Prevention and Risk Factors

- Household Safety: Preventing Poisoning (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/safety-poisoning.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/safety-poisoning.html>]
- Poison-Proof Your Home One Room at a Time: Pesticide Poison Prevention Checklist [<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-10/documents/roombyroom-checklist.pdf>] (Environmental Protection Agency) - **PDF**
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-10/documents/roombyroom-spanish.pdf>]
- Prevention Tips -- Poison Help [<https://poisonhelp.hrsa.gov/what-you-can-do/prevention-tips>] (Health Resources and Services Administration)
Also in Spanish [<https://poisonhelp.hrsa.gov/es/recursos/consejos-prevencion>]
- Read the Label First! Protect Your Household [<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2016-02/documents/household.pdf>] (Environmental Protection Agency) - **PDF**

Read the Label First! Protect Your Pets [<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2016-02/documents/pets.pdf>]
(Environmental Protection Agency) - **PDF**

Treatments and Therapies

- Poisoning: What You Can Do [<https://poisonhelp.hrsa.gov/what-you-can-do>] (Health Resources and Services Administration)


Specifics

- Alcohol Poisoning [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/alcohol-poisoning/symptoms-causes/syc-20354386?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/alcohol-poisoning/symptoms-causes/syc-20354386?p=1>]
- Benzene [<https://www.cdc.gov/chemical-emergencies/chemical-fact-sheets/benzene.html>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Chemical Emergency Preparedness [<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/chemical-emergency.html>] (American Red Cross)
- Cyanide [<https://www.cdc.gov/chemical-emergencies/chemical-fact-sheets/cyanide.html>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- In Case of Pesticide Emergency [<https://www.epa.gov/rodenticides/case-pesticide-emergency>]
(Environmental Protection Agency)
- Strychnine [<https://www.cdc.gov/chemical-emergencies/chemical-fact-sheets/strychnine.html>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Statistics and Research

- National Poison Data System (NPDS) Annual Reports [<https://www.poisoncenters.org/annual-reports>]
(America's Poison Centers)
- Poisonings Among Children Ages 0-14 in 2018
[https://www.safekids.org/sites/default/files/documents/2020_fast_facts_poisonings_v1.pdf] (Safe Kids Worldwide)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Poisoning [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Poisoning%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]
 (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Long-term outcomes of deliberate self-poisoning in adolescents and factors associated with...
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40731294>]
- Article: Trends in emergency department visits for acute intoxication: a 3-year retrospective...
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40655211>]
- Article: Comparing Prehospital Time Among Pediatric Poisoning Patients in Rural and Urban...
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40561991>]
- Poisoning -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Poisoning%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [<https://www.cdc.gov/>]
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/>]

Find a Poison Center [<https://poisonhelp.hrsa.gov/poison-centers/find-poison-center>]

(Health Resources and Services Administration)

Also in Spanish [<https://poisonhelp.hrsa.gov/es/centros-informacion-toxicologica/encontrar-centro>]

- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences [<https://www.niehs.nih.gov/>] 

Also in Spanish [<https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/scied/teachers/educacion>]

Children

- Poison Prevention [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/all-around/Pages/Poison-Prevention.aspx>]

(American Academy of Pediatrics)

Also in Spanish [<https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/safety-prevention/all-around/paginas/poison-prevention.aspx>]

Patient Handouts

- Poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000718.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)

Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000718.htm>]

- Poisoning first aid [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007579.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)

Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007579.htm>]

- Toxicology screen [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003578.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)

Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003578.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Abnormal hemoglobins testing [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003371.htm>]

Ammonia poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002759.htm>]

Black nightshade poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002887.htm>]

Blue nightshade poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002888.htm>]

Bug spray poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002763.htm>]

Caladium plant poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002863.htm>]

Calla lily [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002864.htm>]

Castor oil overdose [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002768.htm>]

Copper poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002496.htm>]

Detergent poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002777.htm>]

Dieffenbachia poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002866.htm>]

Dirt - swallowing [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002840.htm>]

Drain cleaner poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002779.htm>]

Drain opener poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002780.htm>]

Elephant ear poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002867.htm>]

Ethanol poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002644.htm>]

Ethylene glycol blood test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003564.htm>]

Ethylene glycol poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000774.htm>]

Foxglove poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002878.htm>]

Gasoline poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002806.htm>]

Gastric suction [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003882.htm>]

Hydrocarbon pneumonia [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001083.htm>]

Iodine poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002658.htm>]

Jack-in-the-pulpit poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002870.htm>]

Jerusalem cherry poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002871.htm>]

Jimsonweed poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002881.htm>]

Kerosene poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002807.htm>]

Lighter fluid poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002833.htm>]

Lily of the valley poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002882.htm>]

Malathion poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002834.htm>]

Methanol test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003563.htm>]

Mistletoe poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002883.htm>]

Nicotine poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002510.htm>]

Oleander poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002884.htm>]

Oven cleaner poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002800.htm>]

Paradichlorobenzene poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002902.htm>]

Paraquat poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001085.htm>]

Philodendron poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002872.htm>]

Poinsettia plant exposure [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002885.htm>]

Poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000718.htm>]

Poisoning first aid [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007579.htm>]

Pokeweed poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002874.htm>]

Potato plant poisoning - green tubers and sprouts [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002875.htm>]

Rhubarb leaves poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002876.htm>]

Tetrahydrozoline poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002590.htm>]

Toilet bowl cleaners and deodorizers poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002743.htm>]

Toxicology screen [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003578.htm>]

Yew poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002877.htm>]

Zinc poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002570.htm>]

Related Health Topics

- Arsenic [<https://medlineplus.gov/arsenic.html>]
- Asbestos [<https://medlineplus.gov/asbestos.html>]
- Carbon Monoxide Poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/carbonmonoxidepoisoning.html>]
- Foodborne Illness [<https://medlineplus.gov/foodborneillness.html>]
- Household Products [<https://medlineplus.gov/householdproducts.html>]
- Lead Poisoning [<https://medlineplus.gov/leadpoisoning.html>]
- Mercury [<https://medlineplus.gov/mercury.html>]
- Pesticides [<https://medlineplus.gov/pesticides.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Poisoning* is the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences [<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/>]

MedlinePlus links to health information from the National Institutes of Health and other federal government agencies. MedlinePlus also links to health information from non-government Web sites. See our disclaimer [<https://medlineplus.gov/disclaimers.html>] about external links and our quality guidelines [<https://medlineplus.gov/criteria.html>] .

The information on this site should not be used as a substitute for professional medical care or advice. Contact a health care provider if you have questions about your health.

[Learn how to cite this page](#)