

# Poison Prevention



## What is Poison?

### The Health Resources & Services

*Administration defines poison as anything that can be harmful when it is used in the wrong way, used by the wrong person, or used in the wrong amount. When a poison causes harm, it is called a poisoning. Common examples of poisonings are when poisons are swallowed, come in contact with the skin, are splashed in the eyes, or are inhaled.*

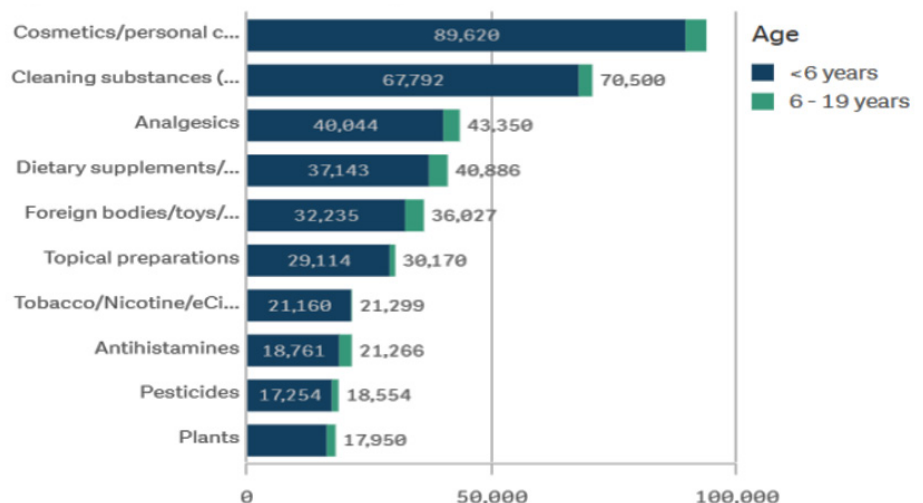
### Resources:

- [Resource & Services Administration](#)
- [National Capital Poison Center](#)
- [WA Poison Center](#)

Things we use everyday such as medicines, chemicals, or products we use at home or work can be considered a poison if used incorrectly. Here are the most common types of poison exposures for children:

1. Cosmetics/personal care products
2. Cleaning substances (household)
3. Analgesics
4. Dietary supplements/herbals/homeopathic
5. Topical preparations
6. Foreign bodies/toys/misc
7. Pesticides
8. Essential oils
9. Antihistamines
10. Tobacco/nicotine/eCigarette products

### Top 10 Generic Substance Categories



2020-2024 webPOISONCONTROL

[www.dshs.wa.gov/fwb](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/fwb)

[fwb@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:fwb@dshs.wa.gov)



## If You Suspect a Poisoning

- Use the [PoisonControl online tool](#) to get specific recommendations based on age, substance, and amount.

OR

- Call Washington Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 for expert guidance.



## Poison Help Line

- Connects you to a nurse, pharmacist, or other poison expert at your local poison control center.
- Is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Is a free phone service.
- Offers bilingual or translation services.



## Spring and Summer Tips to Avoid Poisonings

Food poisoning– always wash your hands before preparing food:

- Store food at the proper temperatures.
- Use a thermometer when cooking and reheating foods.
- Watch for signs of food poisoning. They include fever, headache, diarrhea, stomach pains, nausea, and vomiting.

Household cleaners and other chemical products:

- Keep them in the containers they come in. Do not use food containers to store household cleaners and other strong chemicals.
- Store chemicals away from food.
- Never mix chemicals; this could create a poisonous gas.

Pesticides– stay away from areas that have been sprayed until the spray has dried for at least one hour:

- Wear protective clothing when using spray protects. Remove and wash clothing after using chemicals.
- If pesticides are splashed onto the skin, rinse with running water for 15–20 minutes. If pesticide contacts clothing, take off the clothing before rinsing skin.

Mushrooms– only experts can tell poisonous mushrooms from safe mushrooms:

- Poisonous mushrooms, called “death caps,” often grow in yards and parks.

Spider bites– two common spiders that can harm you are the female black widow and the brown recluse. A bite from one of these spiders can cause serious problems in a child, a senior, or a person in poor health, but these bites rarely cause death:

- The female black widow is a black, shiny spider. It has a red or orange hourglass shape on its underside. Within 2 hours after being bitten by the female, you may feel stomach pain, dizziness, and muscle stiffness. You may have trouble breathing.
- The brown recluse is a yellowish-tan to dark brown spider. It has a small body and long legs. The brown recluse has a dark violin shape on its body. States known to be home to the Brown Recluse are AL, AR, FL, GA, IA, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MO, MS, NC, NE, NM, OH, OK, SC, TN, TX.

Snake bites– if a poisonous snake bites you or someone you know, call Poison Help (1-800-222-1222) right away:

- The experts at your poison center will determine if the snake is poisonous. They will tell you what signs to watch for and what to do.

Plants– If you touch poison ivy, poison sumac, or poison oak, rinse right away with plenty of water for at least 5 minutes.