

Consumer Product Safety Commission

Checklist: Is your home poison safe?

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The home areas listed below are the most common sites of accidental poisonings. Follow this checklist to learn how to correct situations that may lead to poisonings. If you answer "No" to any questions, fix the situation quickly. Your goal is to have all your answers "Yes."

THE KITCHEN	Yes	No
Do all harmful products in the cabinets have child-resistant caps? Products like furniture polish, drain cleaner and some oven cleaners should have safety packaging to keep little children from accidentally opening the packages.	—	—
Are all potentially harmful products in their original containers? There are two dangers if products aren't stored in their original containers. Labels on the original containers often give first aid information if someone should swallow the product. And if products are stored in containers like drinking glasses or pop bottles, someone may think it is food and swallow it.	—	—
Are harmful products stored away from food? If harmful products are placed next to food, someone may accidentally mix up a poisonous substance with food and swallow the poison.	—	—
Have all potentially harmful products been put up high and out of reach of children? The best way to prevent poisoning is making sure that it's impossible to find and get at the poisons. Locking all cabinets that hold dangerous products is the best poison prevention.	—	—

THE BATHROOM	Yes	No
Did you ever stop to think that medicines could poison if used improperly? Many children are poisoned each year by overdoses of pain relievers. This is just one of many poisons that might be in your medicine cabinet.	—	—
Do your pain relievers and other potentially harmful products have child-resistant closures? Aspirins and most prescription drugs come with child-resistant caps. Check to see yours have them, and that they are properly secured. Check your prescriptions before leaving the pharmacy to make sure the medicines are in child-resistant packaging. These caps have been shown to save the lives of children.	—	—
Have you thrown out all out-of-date prescriptions? As medicines get older, the chemicals inside them can change. So what was once a good medicine may now be a dangerous poison. Don't flush medicine or put down the sink. Keep the medicine in the bottle with the child resistant cap on. Black out or remove patient name. Leave medication name and		

strength. Wrap tightly in newspaper and duct tape or other sturdy material like cardboard. Seal liquid medication in a plastic bag to prevent leaking. Place in garbage container on the day of collection or take to the landfill directly.	—	—
Are all medicines in their original containers with the original labels? Prescription medicines may or may not list ingredients. The prescription number on the label will, however, allow rapid identification by the pharmacist of the ingredients should they not be listed. Without the original label and container, you can't be sure of what you're taking.	—	—
If your vitamins or vitamin/mineral supplements contain iron, are they in child-resistant packaging? Most people think of vitamins and minerals as foods and, therefore, nontoxic, but a few iron pills can kill a child.	—	—

THE GARAGE OR STORAGE AREA	Yes	No
Did you know that many things in your garage or storage area that can be swallowed are terrible poisons? Death may occur when people swallow such everyday substances as charcoal lighter, paint thinner and remover, antifreeze and turpentine.	—	—
Do all these poisons have child-resistant caps?	—	—
Are they stored in the original labeled containers?	—	—
Are the original labels easy to read?	—	—
Have you made sure that no poisons are stored in drinking glasses or pop bottles?	—	—
Are all these harmful products locked up and out of sight and reach?	—	—

When all your answers are "Yes," then continue this level of poison protection by making sure that, whenever you buy potentially harmful products, they have child-resistant closures and are kept out of sight and reach. Post the number of the Poison Control Center near your telephone.



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