

# Preventing Poisoning

Poisoning is one of the most common pediatric emergencies, especially among children under five years of age. It is also one of the most difficult to treat. Each year more than 500,000 children swallow household materials left within their reach – and some die.

## **These common household substances are poisonous:**

- Alcohol
- Ammonia
- Bleaches
- Cosmetic (including nail polish, removers, and permanent wave solutions)
- Detergents
- Fertilizers
- Medicines (including liniment, iron pills, aspirin, cold medicine and tranquilizers)
- Furniture polish
- Kerosene, gasoline, lighter fluid and other petroleum products
- Lye and other caustics
- Paint removers
- Paints
- Paint thinners, turpentine
- Pesticides or rat poisons
- Plants-decorative/household weed killers

Most poisoning accidents occur in the kitchen, bathroom and bedroom. All poisonous substances should be kept locked up and in their original containers.

## **Should poisoning occur, immediately take the following action:**

1. Try to determine what substance was swallowed.
2. Immediately call you doctor or Poison Control Center for advice as to the first-aid treatment of the victim.

## **VOMITING SHOULD NOT BE INDUCED:**

1. If a corrosive such as lye or a strong acid has been swallowed.
2. If the child is drowsy, unconscious or convulsing.

In cases where kerosene or other petroleum distillates are ingested your Poison Control Center should determine appropriate treatment, which may include the use of Syrup of Ipecac.

A child who has swallowed a poison is likely to attempt again within a year. Practice poison prevention!