

## REDUCING THE RISK

# POISONING WITH MELATONIN

## EVERY SECOND COUNTS IN A POISON EMERGENCY

- 1 Call 9-1-1 if the person is unconscious or has trouble breathing.
- 2 Call **Poison Help Line (1-800-222-1222)** to connect to your local poison center.
- 3 **Stay calm** — most poison emergencies can be resolved quickly.

Melatonin is a dietary supplement that has been used mainly by adults to help them fall asleep. Recently, there has been increased use among adults and children.<sup>1</sup> Melatonin poisonings among children have also increased. Some of these poisonings have been serious, including hospitalizations.<sup>2</sup>

## WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF TOO MUCH MELATONIN?


Melatonin is widely available in many forms such as tablets, capsules, liquid, chewable tablets, and gummies. The amount of melatonin in these supplements and their effects are highly variable.<sup>3</sup> Often melatonin is not sold in child-resistant packaging. Almost half of emergency department visits for young children related to melatonin were due to flavored gummies.<sup>4</sup>

If a child takes too much melatonin, they may experience:<sup>2,3</sup>

ZZZ Sleepiness

 Dizziness

 Bedwetting

 Nausea<sup>3</sup>

 Headache

## ARE MELATONIN POISONINGS INCREASING?

From 2012 to 2021, **more than 260,000 melatonin ingestions** in children and adolescents younger than 20 years of age were reported to our nation's poison control centers.<sup>4</sup> In 2012, melatonin made up less than 1% of all reported pediatric poisonings compared to 5% in 2021. Most ingestions involved children 5 years old or younger, did not cause serious symptoms, and were managed at home. Approximately 1% of children with melatonin ingestions were hospitalized.<sup>2</sup>



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Health Resources and Services Administration

**HRSA**  
**Poison Help**

# HOW CAN I KEEP MY CHILD SAFE?



A/B

Keep melatonin supplements **up and away and out of reach and sight.**<sup>5</sup>



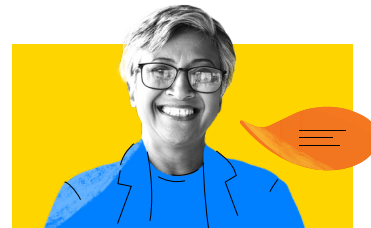
C

Purchase melatonin products that come in **child-resistant containers** (e.g. with child safety caps).



D/E/F

Be sure that melatonin supplements that come in the form of gummies or chewable tablets are **kept away from foods** so they are not confused and eaten as candy.



G

**Always talk with your child's healthcare provider** about sleep concerns before giving melatonin, other supplements, or medications. Many sleep problems can be better managed with a change in schedules or habits.

## Works Cited

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