

The Poison Prevention Educational Series

Presented by:

**the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
Healthcare Systems Bureau
Poison Control Program**



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Poison Help: 1-800-222-1222

Poison Centers 101:

Operations, Staffing, Statistics, and Resources



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Learning Objectives

At the end of this module, you will be able to:

1

Differentiate between a “poisoning” and a “poison exposure.”

2

Describe poison center services.

3

List two strategies for using poison center resources to enhance your practice.

4

Identify important poisoning trends.

5

State how and when to contact your local poison center for assistance.

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Definition: What is a Poisoning?

Poison



Substance capable of causing harm

Poison Exposure



Contact with a potentially harmful substance

Poisoning



Injury, illness or death resulting from a poison exposure

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United States Poison Centers

- A network of local and regional poison centers serve entire U.S.
- 24/7 expert advice
- Accessed by calling the toll free number:
1-800-222-1222
 - Calls are handled by specially trained health care professionals
 - All calls are confidential
 - All calls are free
 - Interpreters are available in over 160 languages

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Poison Center Staff

- Directors
- Medical Directors
- Specialists in Poison Information
- Educators
- Administrative Personnel

Poison Center Staff: Specialists in Poison Information (SPI)

- Provide first-line of service
- Receive intensive training
 - Standardized toxicology knowledge
 - Service area-specific knowledge
 - Continuing education programs
- Engage in self-study

Poison Center Staff: Certifications

Certification

- Specialists in Poison Information (SPI)
 - American Association of Poison Control Centers

Board Certification

- Clinical Toxicologists
 - American Board of Applied Toxicology
- Medical Toxicologists
 - Subspecialty boards of emergency medicine, pediatrics, preventive medicine

Poison Center Operations



Staff provides immediate treatment management for all kinds of poison emergencies

- Obtain history
- Assess potential toxicity

Photo courtesy of Roberto Del Valle, MD
CSPI of the Florida Poison Information Center-Miami

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Poison Center Operations: Resources for Assessing Toxicity

Computerized databases:
POISINDEX™



On-site texts and journal articles

On-site or online access to medical
libraries



Expert consultants in specialized fields

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Poison Center Operations (cont.)

- Make treatment recommendations
 - 72% of cases can be managed over the phone
- May refer patients to emergency department
- Telephone follow-up is routine
- Medical record-keeping and data collection occur until case is closed

Using Your Poison Center

- Drug-related information
 - Identification of unusual drugs
 - Use of new or unusual antidotes, off-label antidotes
 - Lists of recommended stock antidotes
- Training
 - Academic fellowships and rotations
 - Continuing education programs

Using Your Poison Center (cont.)

- May be a referral source for your patients
 - After hours
 - For questions about poisonings
- Community outreach and education
 - Poison prevention programs
 - Educational material

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Practice Strategies

- Develop and adopt policies and procedures
 - Prescription services
 - Clinical services
- Implement patient awareness campaign
 - Signage
 - Publications
- Conduct community outreach and education

Poisoning Data

National Poison Data System (NPDS)

- Data from entire United States
- Collated in real time by the American Association of Poison Control Centers
- Summary data for > 50 million cases since 1983
- 4.2 million calls annually

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NPDS: Data Trends

Age of Victim

- About 50% of poison exposures occur among children \leq age 5
- Most fatalities among adults age 20-59

Location of Exposure

- Majority of cases involved poison exposures in a residence, usually the patient's own home

Site of Caller

- 74% of calls are placed from home
- 16% of calls are placed from health care facilities

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NPDS: Data Trends, Continued

Most Common Exposures

- Medicines
- Products found at home

Most Common Causes of Fatalities

- Pharmaceuticals
- Other causes include alcohols, fumes, gases and vapors, e.g., carbon monoxide

Other Sources of Poisoning Data

Fatality Data

- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/>
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
 - <http://www.cpsc.gov/LIBRARY/neiss.html>

Additional Resources

- American Academy of Clinical Toxicology
- American Association of Poison Control Centers
- American Board of Applied Toxicology
- Institute of Medicine
- National Safety Council
- Poison Prevention Week Council
- Safe Kids Coalition
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
- Consumer Product Safety Commission
- Drug Enforcement Administration
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Food and Drug Administration
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- National Institute on Drug Abuse
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

NOTE: Inclusion on this list of resources does not imply endorsement.

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Contacts

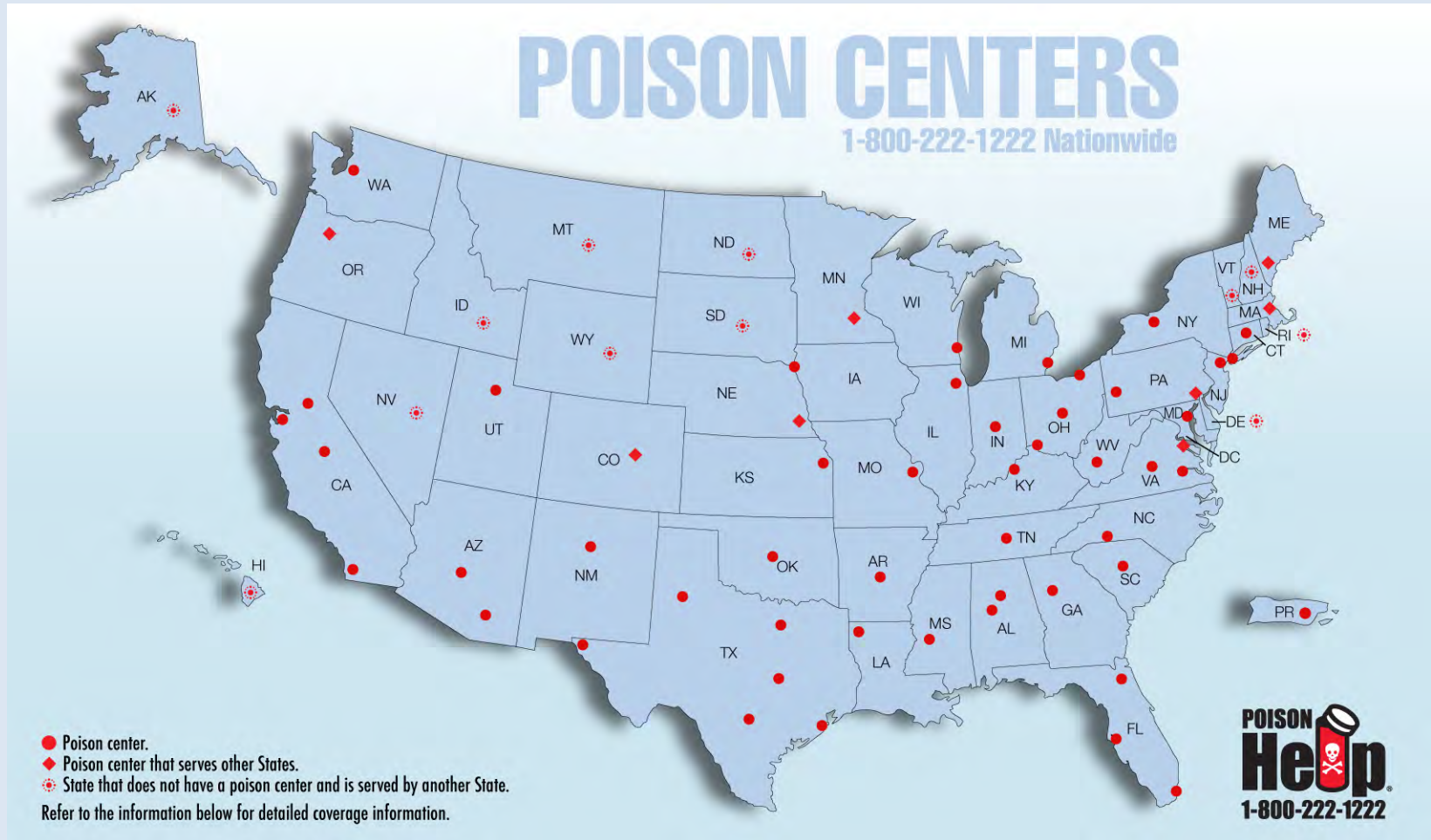
Contact your poison center by calling
1-800-222-1222 for:

- Poison or drug emergencies and questions
- Educational materials for community outreach



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Poison Center Map & Contact Information



<http://www.poisonhelp.hrsa.gov>

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References and Resources

Bronstein AC, Spyker DA, Cantilena LR Jr., Green, JL, Rumack BH, Giffin SL. 2009 Annual Report of the American Association of Poison Control Centers' National Poison Data System (NPDS): 27th Annual Report. *Clinical Toxicology* 2010;48:979-1178.

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Geyer B, Alexander JA, Blanc P, et al. *Forging a Poison Prevention and Control System*. Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, Committee on Poison Prevention and Control, Board on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. Washington: National Academies Press; 2004.

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