

Prevent a Trip to the ED 4th of July Weekend

10 Summer Safety Tips

Diane P. Calello, MD, Executive and Medical Director

Bruce Ruck, Pharm.D., Director, Drug Information and Professional Education

New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES)

Summer holidays should be spent outdoors enjoying the sunshine and warm weather not inside the emergency department (ED) of your local hospital. The majority of poisoning exposures/injuries occur at home and are preventable! Injuries from common household items do not just happen to children, they happen to all including pets.

“Safety is no an accident, it’s a choice,” says Dr. Diane Calello, Medical Director of the NJ Poison Center, Rutgers NJ Medical School. “As your family prepares for the weekend, I want you to be proactive by remembering these 10 safety tips.”

10 Summer Safety Reminders

- Use caution in the sun because some medications can greatly increase the chance for severe sunburn even when using sunscreen.
- Do not cross-contaminate! Cooked foods should not be placed on plates or in containers that previously held raw meat, poultry, fish, or seafood without washing them with soap and water first.
- Carbon monoxide poisoning happens in the summer too. Never use a grill indoors, in a garage, shed, camper, tent, etc. Swim and play away from boat engines.
- Use EPA registered insect repellent (DEET at least 20% or more) to prevent the spread of disease from mosquitoes and ticks (Zika, Lymes, and West Nile). bit.ly/2qslUwW
- When friends and family visit, **lock up** all of their medications (prescription, over-the-counter, dietary, herbal). Children, teens and pets die every year because medicines are easily accessible.
- Store charcoal lighter fluid and lamp/torch oil in locked cabinets, away from food and drink and out of sight and reach of children and pets. Swallowing these products can lead to serious poisoning and even death.
- Use caution with alcoholic beverages since the alcohol may interact with medications.

- Do not pick plants/mushrooms to eat from your backyard or fields. Many people suffer serious health effects and even die each year from mushroom poisoning.
- When giving/taking medicine, use a dosing device (syringe or cup) not a household spoon meant for eating. Using a household spoon increases the risk for overdose.
- Clean up right after parties. Cigarette butts, alcohol and liquid nicotine can be dangerous to both children and pets.

“Remember, we are here to help you even during holidays so save our number in your phone, [1-800-222-1222](tel:1-800-222-1222),” says Dr. Calello. “If you believe your child, pet, or anyone else may have ingested something harmful, call us right away for expert help.” If someone is unconscious, not breathing, seizing/convulsing, bleeding profusely, difficult to arouse/wake up, etc. call 9-1-1.

Help is Just a Phone Call Away!

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