



MISSOURI POISON CENTER

WINTER

T'IS THE SEASON TO BE CAREFUL.....

Poison Prevention Tips for Winter

When the temperature drops there is more to be concerned about than colds and the flu. There are some everyday chemicals in use in the winter that can pose a risk if they are swallowed, especially to children and pets.

ANTIFREEZE AND WINDSHIELD WIPER FLUID

Many winterizing products for home vehicles use chemicals to prevent freezing in the engine or windshield washers. The two to watch out for are ethylene glycol in antifreeze, and methanol, also called "wood alcohol" in windshield wiper fluid. Either of these products can make a person or animal very sick if even a little is swallowed, and could possibly damage their eyes or kidneys, too.

Safety tips: Keep antifreeze and windshield wiper fluid, as well as all household cleaning products and chemicals, in the original containers they came in, with the cap on tight, and locked away from children and pets.

- When topping off the car with antifreeze or wiper fluid, clean up any spills right away so the kids or the dog can't find the puddle.
- Before throwing away an empty container, rinse it with water to make sure it's empty, and replace the safety cap.

LAMP OIL

Lamp oil appeals to children because it comes in bright colors and smells nice and can look like something good to drink. However, it's very slippery and often "goes down the wrong way." It causes choking and gagging and can turn into serious pneumonia.

Safety tips: Consider getting rid of candles and lamps that burn oil until all the children are in grade school.

- Make sure the refill bottle has a safety cap or don't buy it and bring it home.
- Keep the refill bottle locked away.
- Children can drink lamp oil directly from the candle or lamp, so lock these away also when they are not in use.
- Never leave burning lamps or candles unsupervised.

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SNOW SALT, ROCK SALT AND ICE MELT CHEMICALS

These products used to melt ice or snow on sidewalks and roadways are simply large crystals of table salt and its relatives; and are quite tasty. Too much salt all at once – say more than a teaspoonful - can make a child or animal very sick.

Safety tips: Keep the salt bag out of reach.

- Sweep up salt crystals spilled indoors or brought in on shoes right away.
- Discourage children from sampling salt they may find outside on sidewalks or parking lots.

COLD AND FLU MEDICINES

Many cold and flu products contain a combination of active ingredients to deal with many symptoms at the same time. Read the label and understand what is in each medicine to avoid accidental overdosing of an ingredient.

Safety tips: Follow the instructions on the medicine label exactly.

If you have any questions, your neighborhood pharmacist or the poison center will be happy to help you.

CARBON MONOXIDE (CO)

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas and is sometimes called the ‘Silent Killer’ because it sneaks in with no color, odor, or taste. Any heat source, tool, or appliance that does not run on electricity or a battery and burns any kind of fuel is a possible risk. Good ventilation is the key to safety because it prevents carbon monoxide from building up to dangerous levels indoors.

Safety tips: Put a carbon monoxide detector in at least one of the bedrooms used by an adult. If the alarm goes off, immediately leave the house and call the fire department.

Do not use anything that runs on an engine or burns fuel inside the house except appliances that are meant for indoor use and are installed and operating properly.

If you want to use a fireplace or a wood stove, make sure the flue is open and working properly so that any CO is carried away to the outdoors.

For more information on Carbon Monoxide, [click here](#).

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A Program of SSM Cardinal Glennon

Education is key to prevention. The Missouri Poison Center welcomes teachers, child care providers, scout leaders, EMS providers and other community educators to use these free resources to teach about poison safety.

BE POISON SMART! KEEP POISONOUS PRODUCTS
OUT OF SIGHT & OUT OF REACH.

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