



POISON PREVENTION FOR GRANDPARENTS AND OLDER ADULTS

The Missouri Poison Center is not just for parents of young children. We also help older adults. Older adults commonly call us because they took too much of their own medicine, made a mistake with a household product, took someone else's medicine, swallowed the wrong dose, or are concerned about a drug interaction. They also call us about poisonous plant information, insect or snake bites, carbon monoxide incidents, or other things that may have been used in the wrong way, by the wrong person, or in the wrong amount.

WHY ARE OLDER ADULTS VULNERABLE?

The average older adult takes prescription and over-the-counter medications or supplements daily.

- ▶ *Result: There is a greater risk of drug interactions and adverse drug reactions.*

Many older adults suffer from failing eyesight.

- ▶ *Result: It's easy to make errors, like mistaking ear drops for eye drops, taking the wrong medication or having difficulty reading medication labels.*

Memory lapses are common in older adults

- ▶ *Result: Older adults may take extra doses of medication accidentally.*

Older adults often have pre-existing medical problems.

- ▶ *Result: They may worsen the adverse effects of poisoning.*

OLDER ADULT'S HOMES CAN BE DANGEROUS FOR CHILDREN

Older adults may leave medications out so they don't forget to take them.

- ▶ *Result: Medications may be within easy reach of curious young visitors, who might mistake them for candy.*

Older adult's homes may not be "child-proof."

- ▶ *Result: Cosmetics and cleaning materials are easy for children to reach.*

Children like exploring and adventure.

- ▶ *Result: It can be hard for older adults to keep up with little ones – an accidental poisoning can happen in just seconds.*

TIPS FOR KEEPING GRANDCHILDREN SAFE



When possible, choose medicine with child-resistant caps. Remember, NOTHING is childproof.



Keep weekly pill dispensers in a secure place. They are not child resistant.



Never take your medications in front of young children. Children like to imitate adults.



If children visit your home, keep medications in a locked cabinet.

TIPS FOR YOU



Turn on the lights and wear glasses if needed before taking medication.



Understand the directions for using all medications.



Read the label on household products before use.



Keep a medication record, bring it to every appointment with a health care provider and update it regularly.



missouripoisoncenter@ssmhealth.com

This email is not monitored by the emergency hotline specialists. Please DO NOT email questions about a suspected poisoning.



missouripoisoncenter.org

