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## **Illinois Joins Poison Centers Nationwide to Raise Awareness About Poisoning Prevention, Promote Safety**

*Illinois Poison Center to Participate in National Poison Prevention Week  
March 15 - 21*

**CHICAGO** – The Illinois Poison Center (IPC), the nation’s oldest poison center, joins poison centers around the country to raise awareness about poison dangers and educate the public on ways to further protect their loved ones during National Poison Prevention Week (NPPW), which runs from March 15 – 21. This year’s theme is “When the Unexpected Happens, We’re Here for You.” For more than 70 years, poison centers have provided vital information and resources to families to help reduce the threat of poisoning and save lives.

“When it comes to poison exposure, time is critical,” said IPC Medical Director Michael Wahl, M.D. “Our pharmacists, nurses and poison specialists are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to provide clear, reliable guidance and immediate support. We encourage the public to contact IPC at 1-800-222-1222 with any concern, big or small. From our experience, prompt action can help prevent complications and avoid unnecessary trips to the emergency room.”

**In 2025, IPC handled 72,500 cases involving potentially harmful substances, ranging from minor to severe.** In fact, approximately one-third of IPC’s poison calls come directly from healthcare professionals on behalf of their patients, seeking additional guidance about treatment plans related to harmful exposures such as overdoses, medication errors or adverse reactions, plants, household chemicals, automotive products, insect stings, lead, carbon monoxide and more.

Children are especially vulnerable to choking or accidental ingestions, but adults are also at risk. According to the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)), poisoning—including drug overdoses and carbon monoxide—was the leading cause of injury-related death in the United States, surpassing motor vehicle traffic deaths and firearms combined.

Free educational resources about poisoning exposure can be found [here](#) and include:

- “My Child Ate...” [guide](#);
- A complimentary safety packet featuring a sticker, magnet and first aid tips for poisonings;
- A video library; and
- Blog posts tackling urgent, trending and seasonal topics.

The [America's Poison Centers](#) recognizes National Poison Prevention Week from March 15-21. March is also Illinois Poison Prevention Month.

IPC encourages the public to participate in Illinois Poison Prevention Week by:

- Sharing IPC's website ([illinoispoisoncenter.org](http://illinoispoisoncenter.org)) with friends and family;
- Completing IPC's free online Poison Prevention Education Course (available in both English and Spanish) [here](#);
- Ordering [free materials](#) for IPPM/NPPW: children's paint sheets, safety packets, stickers, magnets, mirrors, mini tape measurers, etc.;
- Posting on social media using #NPPW26; and
- Raising awareness about IPC's toll-free, confidential expert helpline service (800-222-1222)

### **About the Illinois Poison Center**

The Illinois Poison Center, operated by the Illinois Health and Hospital Association, is a nonprofit health service that provides the people of Illinois with comprehensive and trusted information and treatment advice on potentially harmful substances via a free, confidential 24-hour helpline (1-800-222-1222) staffed by specially trained physicians, nurses and pharmacists. The Illinois Poison Center is dedicated to reducing harm due to poisoning. IPC's expert-led helpline provides immediate treatment recommendations to the public and healthcare providers. IPC is the oldest and one of the largest poison centers in the nation. IPC has provided timely poison prevention and treatment services since 1953.

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