

# Poisoning



## True Story

*A 1-year-old was left alone on the floor with diapers, cream and a bottle of baby oil. When the mother returned, she found the victim covered with baby oil. The victim also had ingested the oil. The cause of death was pneumonitis secondary to hydrocarbon ingestion.*

-From the files of MECAP  
(Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project)

## The Facts

- Each year approximately one million children age 6 and younger are unintentionally poisoned.
- More than 90% of all poison exposures occur in the home.
- The most common poisons are medicine and cleaning products, lead-based paint, cosmetics, plants and carbon monoxide.
- Children are at significantly greater risk than adults for accidental poisoning because they are smaller, have faster metabolic rates and are less able physically to handle toxic chemicals.

## What You Can Do

- Store all household products and medications out of a child's sight and reach.
- Always read labels, follow directions and give medicine to children based on their weight and age.
- Test children for lead exposure and test homes built before 1978 for lead-based paint.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors in your home in every sleeping area and on the ceiling at least 15 feet from fuel burning appliances.
- Store poisons in their original containers.
- Keep the Poison Control Center's phone number next to every phone in your home: 1-800-222-1222.



Led By

**BLANK CHILDREN'S  
HOSPITAL**  
IOWA HEALTH SYSTEM

Safe Kids Greater Des Moines, led by Blank Children's Hospital, is a grassroots organization dedicated to preventing unintentional injury in children ages 0-14.

For more information call (515) 241-6293 or visit [www.dsmsafekids.org](http://www.dsmsafekids.org).