

The School Nurses' Prescription

News You Can Use from Your Indiana Poison Center

Eight Toxic Things You Didn't Know You Had ...

October
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... In your home, your office, your school, your purse



Eye drops (Visine®) and nasal spray (Afrin®) – can contain Imidazoline decongestants and a few cc can be sufficient to make a child very sleepy, very bradycardic and apneic – for up to 24 hours!



Diarrhea medicine (Imodium®/loperamide and Lomotil®) – also can cause significant CNS depression, bradycardia, hypotension and apnea – symptoms may take hours to onset.



Yew bushes – this very common landscaping plant is quite poisonous. The seeds and leaves contain taxine, which causes nausea and vomiting, bradycardia, hypotension and seizures.



Lily of the valley – This common groundcover is also quite toxic. Even a sip of the water that the flowers are sitting in is enough to cause toxicity – very like digoxin toxicity, with bradycardia, hypotension and blockades.



Rare earth magnets – They are wonderfully fun to play with, but have the potential to be terribly problematic when swallowed! They can cause GI obstruction, necrosis and perforation when more than one is swallowed.



Button batteries – Similarly, they can lodge in the esophagus without causing any symptoms and then can cause burns or erode through the esophagus and cause surgical emergencies to develop.

**INDIANA
POISON
CENTER**

How can IPC help you? - Call **1-800-222-1222** and find out!



Acetaminophen (Tylenol Extra Strength®, Pamprin Maximum®, Midol Maximum®, Excedrin AF®, etc.) – Even a few adult extra strength pills can result in fatal liver damage for a small child.



Antifreeze

A teaspoonful of methanol antifreeze in a small child or a couple of ounces in larger children or adults can cause blindness, and several ounces of ethylene glycol antifreeze in a larger child or an adult, can cause kidney failure and possibly death. Remember that lock de-icer frequently contains methanol too.

If you suspect an exposure to any of these (or any other substance) call Indiana Poison Center Immediately at 1-800-222-1222! We're ready and waiting to help you, 24/7/365!

STREET WALKING

Jimson Weed is an actual weed that grows wild in the fields of Indiana and most of the United States. Its botanical name is "*Datura stramonium*" and it is a relative of the *Datura* species from India. The name Jimson Weed is a variant of "Jamestown weed", as it was first recognized and misused by European settlers in the Jamestown, VA settlement in the 1600s, although it had been recognized by Native Americans long before that time. Jimson Weed abuse remains popular among teens and young adults, as it is available for free and is not illegal to use.

Other names for Jimson Weed are Devil's Weed, Angel's Trumpet, Thorn Apple, and Stink Weed. Jimson Weed is a large plant, 3 to 5 feet tall, with large white and purple flowers. It smells very "rank". The "fruit" presents as about 2 inch long hard brown spiny capsules full of small black shiny seeds. The entire plant contains the toxins atropine, hyoscyamine and scopolamine, which you may recognize as drugs used to treat cardiac problems, irritable bowel disease and motion sickness.



Jimson Weed is abused as a hallucinogen. About 1 teaspoonful of seeds is the "dose" for hallucinations. Chewing the seeds may result in a more rapid onset of symptoms – swallowing the seeds whole may result in prolonged effects, lasting several days. Symptoms are typically anticholinergic – the patient is agitated, hallucinating, flushed, has dry skin and dry mucous membranes, dilated pupils, and urinary retention. The primary treatment is to end the exposure and to treat the symptoms by judicious treatment with benzodiazepines for sedation.

If you suspect someone has a Jimson Weed exposure, please call the Indiana Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 right away! These patients can be quite complicated to manage, as they tend to be symptomatic for several days and usually require intensive care.

The School Nurses' Prescription is an e-newsletter for Indiana school nurses from the Indiana Poison Center. If you have comments, suggestions, or topics you would like to see addressed in future e-newsletters, or if you aren't on the Indiana School Nurse list-serve and would like to subscribe to this e-newsletter, please contact Gwenn Christianson at gchristi@clarian.org