

# Seasonal Tips: Fall

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# HRSA

Poison Help

Kids are back in school. Cold-and-flu season is here. Holidays are just around the corner. Here are some tips to help you prevent poisonings during this busy time of year:

## Medicines

- Keep medicines (as well as vitamins and diet supplements) in the containers they came in. Do this at home AND when traveling.
- Lock up medicines and household products where children can't see or reach them.
- Use containers that are made to keep children out. Replace caps tightly after using a product. Remember that no container can promise to keep children out.
- Tell your doctor about all medicines you are taking. Mention prescription AND over-the-counter drugs.
- Read and follow directions and warnings on the label before taking medicine. If you have questions about how to use your medicine, call your doctor or pharmacist.
- Read the label before taking or giving medicine EVERY TIME.
- Be careful when taking drugs together. Doing so can be risky. Some medicines should not be taken with food, alcohol, or other medicines. Read carefully the labels of any over-the-counter drugs you are taking. Be sure you are not using two or more products that contain the same drug. Be extra careful with the drug acetaminophen.
- Never take other people's prescription drugs. Take only those that are prescribed for you. Never share prescription drugs.
- Never take medicine in the dark.
- Talk to your doctor before taking any food supplements (like vitamins, minerals, or herbs).
- Products, like medicine, that taste, smell, or look like candy or drinks may attract children. Be sure to keep these products out of sight. Keep them out of reach and locked up.

- Children learn by imitating adults. Children who see adults taking medicine will try to do the same thing.
- Get rid of medicines that have expired or are no longer needed. Ask your local pharmacist how you can return unused, unneeded, or expired prescription drugs to pharmaceutical take-back locations for safe disposal. If this is not available, take the unused, unneeded, or expired prescription drugs out of their original containers. Mix the drugs with an undesirable substance, such as kitty litter, and put them in waterproof containers, such as empty cans or sealable bags, to make sure that they are not found and used by people or animals. Throw these containers in the trash. Your poison control center may have updated advice for your area, call 1-800-222-1222.

## Berries

- Berries are often found on plants in the fall. Some berries can poison you.
- Berries may attract children. They may think these berries are just like the fruits at the food market.
- Some berries that can harm people do not harm birds and other animals.
- If you think someone ate one or more berries from a plant, call Poison Help (1-800-222-1222) right away. Poison control center experts probably WON'T be able to identify the plant on the phone. So, before a poisoning occurs, learn the names of plants around your home.
- A person at a greenhouse or plant nursery can help you identify the plant.

When accidents happen with chemicals or medicine, call Poison Help at 1-800-222-1222. Get help right away from a nurse, pharmacist, or other poison expert. If someone has trouble breathing, call 911 or your local emergency ambulance number right away. [www.PoisonHelp.HRSA.gov](http://www.PoisonHelp.HRSA.gov)





## Back to School

- Children often use glue, paint, ink, and other art products at home, school, and day-care. These art products are mixtures of chemicals. They can be dangerous if not used correctly. Make sure children use art products safely.
- Young children are very likely to taste pretty, colorful art products. If splashed into eyes or spilled onto skin, these products can harm children of any age.
- Handle art products according to the directions on their labels. They will tell you how to use and store them safely. Read the warnings and pay attention to them.
- Art is an important part of early learning. **Here are some safety tips to follow when supervising children's use of art products:**
  - Read the label carefully. Follow directions for safe use and disposal.
  - Throw away products that have expired.
  - Do not eat or drink while using art products.
  - Wash skin after contact with art products. Clean equipment. Wipe tables, desks, and counters.
  - Never use products for painting skin unless the product says it is safe to do so.
  - Never use products to decorate food unless the product says it is safe to do so.
  - Keep art products in the containers they came in.



## Mushrooms

- Only experts can tell poisonous mushrooms from safe mushrooms.
- Poisonous mushrooms, called "death caps," often grow in yards and parks.
- Eating even a few bites of certain mushrooms can cause liver damage that can kill you.



## Carbon Monoxide (CO)

- Fall is usually the time we turn on heaters and generators. Make sure your heating system is running smoothly. Put fresh batteries in CO alarms.