

## Poison Prevention During the Holidays

With the holiday season right around the corner, Child Safe Canada would like to remind you of a few vital safety measures to ensure your family's safety and well-being around poisons. During the holiday season, emergency rooms in children's hospitals have a dramatic rise in visits due to poisoning. Most poisoning incidents, often fatal, could have been prevented through simple safety proofing.

**Ensure this holiday season is the most enjoyable and safest ever. Safety proofing your home, or areas within your host's home, takes only a few minutes and provides priceless comfort and safety.**

**Stay vigilant despite the holidays being such a busy time.** One common mishap during the holidays is leaving items unattended in a young child's reach. Parents/guardians may be extra busy, and their usual careful attention is divided with the demands of entertaining.

- When you know you have distractions, slow down and pay attention to potential hazards.
- Pay special attention to batteries: a swallowed battery can cause severe airway burns. Keep all items with batteries, including button-type batteries, out of reach, and ensure battery doors are secured well.
- Guests' handbags and suitcases may contain medications, make-up, perfumes, and other related products. Ask guests to store these items out of reach of children.

**Be aware of sneaky poisons.** If you wouldn't serve it on a dinner plate, it's a poison, and therefore it should be stored in a safe and secured location. Even a small amount of make-up, a cigarette, or a poisonous plant ingested by a toddler can necessitate a trip to the emergency room.

- Move dangerous seasonal items such as antifreeze and windshield washer fluids out of sight and out of reach.
- Ensure the beautiful holiday plants and flowers that you decorate with are not poisonous. You can check their safety online at most local poison control sites.

**Inquire about your host's safety proofing.** During the holiday season we often travel to the homes of relatives or friends, which may not be safety proofed if young children do not live in the home.

- Be open and speak with your host about the safety of your children.
- Ask that poisons and other dangerous items, including any bedside or bathroom medications, be moved to a safe, locked cupboard.

**“Prevention Is the Key to Safety”**

Child Safe Canada  
[www.childsafecanada.com](http://www.childsafecanada.com)