

Healthy Living Newsletter

Take Control of Your Health, Your Benefits, and Your Future Wellness / June 2011

Children and Home Safety

Preparing for Emergencies:

Children need to know how to handle emergencies. Keep emergency numbers posted near all telephones. Make sure children know their own telephone number and address.

Children need to know what to do and where to go if there is a fire. Develop and practice a home fire escape plan. Explain how smoke detectors work and where to find fire extinguishers.

Water: Do not leave bathing children unsupervised in the home. If there are toddlers in the home, remember to close toilet lids and keep aquariums out of reach. Turn down the water heater.

Electricity: Children need to be taught electrical safety at an early age. Parents need to insert safety plugs in unused outlets when young children are in the home.

Medicines: Periodically clean out the medicine cabinet. Throw away outdated medicines. Never put a medicine container with its contents in the trash. Properly dispose of old medicines by either pouring them down the drain or toilet. Rinse the container before disposing of it.

Firearms: Firearms and ammunition need to be stored where children can not reach them. Store ammunition in a locked place, separate from the firearms. Use locks that children can not operate and store the firearms in a locked cabinet.



Window Covering Cords: Children can accidentally strangle themselves in window covering cords. Use a clamp, clothes pin, cleat or tie-down device to keep cords out of the reach of children. The cord can also be tied to itself to shorten its length.

Plants: Children need to be taught not to eat any part of a plant. If you are uncertain of a plant's identity, take it to a nursery or florist to be identified. It is a good idea to label plants found in the home and throw away leavers as they die and fall.

Miniature Button Batteries: These batteries may cause poisoning if accidentally swallowed or internal burns if they are lodged in the esophagus or intestinal tract. These tiny batteries (used in watches, calculators, cameras, and hearing aids) usually pass through the person without any problem. However, if one of these batteries is swallowed, you should contact the local Poison Control Center, or your physician.

Source: UPS Road Map to Health

Water Safety

- Never leave a child alone near water whether it's on the beach, at a pool, or in the bathtub. If you must leave the area, take your child with you.
- Kids do not drown only in pools. Bathtubs, buckets, toilets, and hot tubs present drowning dangers as well.
- Enroll children older than age three in swimming lessons taught by qualified instructors. But keep in mind that lessons do not make your child "drown-proof."
- Teach your children these four key swimming rules:
 - >Always swim with a buddy.
 - >Do not dive into unknown bodies of water. Jump feet first to avoid hitting your head on a shallow bottom.
 - >Do not push or jump on others.
 - >Be prepared for an emergency.
- Always use approved personal flotation devices (life jackets).
- Always have a first-aid kit and emergency phone contacts handy. Parents should be trained in CPR.

Source: National Safety Council

Health & Wellness Events

See your local Occ Health Manager and Wellness Champions for more information about Health & Wellness activities this month in your facility.

Aggressive Driving

Aggressive driving can include following too closely, speeding, unsafely changing lanes, failing to signal an intent to change lanes, and other forms of negligent or inconsiderate driving. The trigger for an aggressive driver is usually traffic congestion coupled with a schedule that is almost impossible to meet. As a result, the aggressive driver generally commits multiple violations in an

attempt to make up time. Unfortunately these actions put the rest of us at risk. Rush hour crashes are a major contributor to congestion and approximately 10 percent of these rush hour crashes can contribute to a second crash.

When confronted by aggressive drivers, make every attempt to get out of their way. Avoid eye contact. Ignore gestures and refuse to return them.

Report aggressive drivers to appropriate authorities by providing a vehicle description, license number, location, and if possible, direction of travel. If an aggressive driver is involved in a crash farther down the road, stop at a safe distance from the crash scene, wait for police to arrive and report the driving behavior that you witnessed.

Source: UPS Road Map to Health

Fire Prevention Tips



- Never leave food unattended on a stove.
- Keep cooking areas free of flammable objects, such as dishtowels, potholders, and paper bags.
- Keep all matches and lighters out of the reach of children. Store them up high, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Install smoke alarms on every floor of the home, including the basement, and near rooms in which people sleep.
- Use long-life smoke alarms with lithium-powered batteries and hush buttons, which allow a person to stop false alarms quickly. If long-life alarms are not available, use regular alarms and replace the batteries annually.
- Test all smoke alarms every month to ensure they work properly.

- Keep several fire extinguishers available in the home in key areas and always near an escape route.
- Devise a family fire escape plan and practice it every six months. In the plan, describe at least two different ways each family member can escape every room, and designate a safe place in front of the home to meet after escaping a fire.
- Space heaters need space. Keep them at least three feet away from flammable/combustible materials. Always turn off heaters when leaving a room or going to bed.
- Have a professional chimney sweep inspect chimneys every year. They will fix any cracks, blockages and leaks, and clean any build-up in the chimney that could start a fire.
- Gasoline is extremely dangerous. Inside a garage or home, gasoline vapors can explode with just a tiny spark. If you must keep some, use an approved safety container and keep the container in an outside shed away from the home.

*Source: UPS Road Map to Health,
www.homesafetycouncil.org
& www.cdc.gov*

Escape a Fire



- Check closed doors with the back of your hand to feel for heat before you open them.
- If the door is hot, do not open it. Find a second way out, such as a window. If you can not escape through a window, hang a white sheet outside the window to alert firefighters to your presence.
- Stuff the cracks around the doors with towels, rags, bedding or tape and cover vents to keep smoke out.
- If there is a phone in the room where you are trapped, call the fire department again and tell them exactly where you are.
- If the door is cold, slowly open it and ensure that the fire and/or smoke is not blocking your escape route. If your escape route is blocked, shut the door and use another escape route.
- Once you are out of the building, **STAY OUT!** Do not go back for any reason.

Source: www.ci.camden.nj.us

Poison Ivy, Oak or Sumac



Poison ivy, oak, and sumac can cause a skin rash called allergic contact dermatitis. The rash is caused by contact with an oil (urushiol) found in the plants. Urushiol is an allergen, so the rash is actually an allergic reaction to the oil in those plants.

Indirect contact with urushiol can also cause the rash. This may happen when you touch clothing, pet fur, sporting gear, gardening tools, or other objects that have come in contact with one of these plants. When contact with the plants is unavoidable, heavy clothing (long pants, long-sleeved shirt, and vinyl gloves) and barrier creams or lotions may provide some protection.

Source: *UPS Road Map to Health*

Preventing Slips and Falls in the Home



- Keep the floor clean. Clean up grease, water, and other liquids immediately.
- Do not wax floors. Use non-skid throw rugs to reduce your chance of slipping on linoleum.
- Install handrails in stairways. Have grab bars in the bathroom.
- Make sure living areas are well lit.
- Be aware that climbing and reaching high places will increase your chance of a fall. Use a sturdy step stool with handrails when these tasks are necessary.
- Follow medication dosages closely. Using medications incorrectly may lead to dizziness, weakness, and other side effects.
- Have a mat or non-skid strips in the tub or shower.
- Have a bath mat with a non-skid bottom on the bathroom floor.
- Use a shower chair and handheld showerhead if prone to falling.
- Take extra care with changes in floor surface (for example, places where the carpet meets floor).
- Before getting out of bed, always take time to sit on the edge of the bed to make sure you are not feeling light-headed or dizzy.
- Do not rush to get to the front door or answer a telephone.
- Use a cane or walker if you feel unsteady.
- Keep all assistance devices in good repair (for example, replace worn rubber tips).

Source: *UPS Road Map to Health & arthritis.about.com*

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an invisible odorless gas that is produced when burning any fuel, such as gasoline, propane, natural gas, oil, wood and charcoal. CO is a silent killer, causing illness by decreasing the amount of oxygen present in a person's body.

The most common symptoms include headache, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, and confusion. In severe cases, the person

may lose consciousness or die. More than one person in the household can suffer symptoms at the same time.

Prevention tips:

- Install a CO alarm outside every sleeping area on every level of your home.
- Test alarms every month and replace them every five years.
- Make sure the alarms can be heard when you test them and practice an escape plan with your entire family.
- Have all gas, oil or coal burning appliances inspected by a technician every year to ensure they are working correctly and are properly ventilated.

Source: *www.safekids.org*

Poison Prevention Tips



Drugs and Medicine

- Follow directions on the label when you give or take medicines. Read all warning labels. Some medicines can not be taken safely when you take other medicines or drink alcohol.
- Turn on a light when you give or take medicines at night so that you have the correct amount of the right medicine.
- Keep medicines in their original bottles or containers.
- Never share prescription medicines. Medicines should be taken by the person prescribed and for the reason prescribed.
- When you take medicines yourself, do not put your next dose on the counter or table where children can reach them.
- Keep opioid pain medications, such as methadone, hydrocodone, and oxycodone, in a safe place that can only be reached by the people who take or give them.
- Dispose of unused, unneeded, or expired prescription drugs. Follow the federal guidelines for how to accomplish this.

Household Chemicals

- Always read the label before using a product that may be poisonous.
- Never mix household or chemical products together. This could result in toxic vapors or gases.
- Turn on a fan and open the windows when using chemical products such as household cleaners.
- Wear protective clothing, including long sleeve shirts, long pants, socks, shoes, and gloves when spraying pesticides and other chemicals. Pesticides can be absorbed through the skin and be extremely poisonous.
- Stay away from areas that have recently been sprayed.

Keep Young Children Safe From Poisoning

- Keep all drugs in medicine cabinet or other childproof cabinets that young children can not reach.
- Avoid taking medicine in front of children because they copy adults.

- Be aware of any legal or illegal drugs that guests may bring into your house. Do not let guests leave drugs where children can find them, for example, in a pillbox, purse, backpack, or coat pocket.
- Do not leave household products out after using them. Return the products to a childproof cabinet as soon as you are done with them.
- Identify poisonous plants in your yard and place them out of reach of children or remove them.

Source: www.cdc.gov & www.wvpc.org

What to do if a poisoning occurs:

1. Remain calm.
2. Call 911 if you have a poison emergency and the victim has collapsed or is not breathing. If the victim is awake and alert, dial 1-800-222-1222 and have the following information ready:
 - >the victim's age and weight
 - >the container or bottle of the poison
 - >the time of the poison exposure
 - >the address where the poisoning occurred
3. Stay on the phone and follow the instructions from the emergency operator or poison control center.

Questions?

If you have any questions or topics that you would like to see covered in this newsletter, e-mail your suggestions to:

Chris Hunkler (nbd2cah@ups.com)



Sneak Peek

Major topics for July's issue of the newsletter include:

**Immunization Awareness
Types of Vaccines**

Childhood Immunizations

What Would Happen If We Stopped Vaccinations?

