


**Module 3**

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Understanding the Poisoning Problem

Objective: To provide current poison information and give a better understanding of the poisoning problem.



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**Module 3**

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Unit 1: Poison Defined



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**Module 3**

**Unit 1: Poison Defined**

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• A poison is any substance that can hurt your body or make you sick if:

- Used the wrong way
- Used by the wrong person
- Used in the wrong amount



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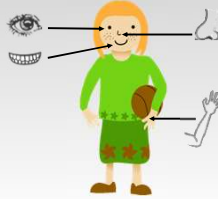
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## Module 3 Unit 1: Poison Defined

• The most common ways a poison can enter the body is by:

- Ingestion (mouth) – most common route of exposure
- Ocular exposure (eye)
- Dermal exposure (skin)
- Inhalation (nose)



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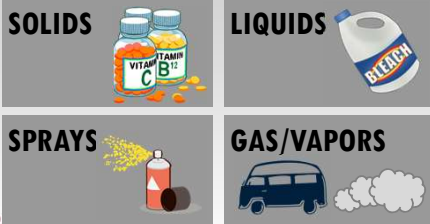
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## Module 3 Unit 1: Poison Defined

• A potential poison can be found all around us in different forms:



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## Module 3 Unit 1: Poison Defined

• Top 5 Poison Exposures:

- Analgesics
- Household Cleaning Substances
- Cosmetics/Personal Care Products
- Sedatives/Hypnotics/Antipsychotics
- Antidepressants



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## Module 3

### Unit 1: Poison Defined

- Other common poisons:
  - Antihistamines
  - Anticonvulsants
  - Cardiovascular Drugs
  - Cold and Cough Preparations
  - Bites and Envenomations
  - Topical Preparations
  - Foreign Bodies/Toys/Misc.
  - Vitamins
  - Pesticides
  - Plants
  - Stimulants and Street Drugs
  - Antimicrobials
  - Dietary supplements/herbals
  - Automotive Products
  - Alcohols
  - Carbon monoxide




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## Module 3

### Unit 2: Poisoning Statistics and Victims




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## Module 3

### Unit 2: Poisoning Statistics & Victims

- According to the CDC, unintentional poisoning is the leading cause of injury death for all age groups.




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### Module 3

#### Unit 2: Poisoning Statistics & Victims

- Over 2 million human exposure cases are managed by the 55 poison control centers every year.
- On average, poison control centers receive an exposure case every 15 seconds. 
- According to the Lewin Group, Inc. Final Report on the Value of the Poison Center System, poison control centers save Americans more than \$1.8 billion every year in medical costs and lost productivity!



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### Module 3

#### Unit 2: Poisoning Statistics & Victims

- It is important to note that many poisonings go unreported to poison control centers.
- Instead of calling poison control centers, victims seek help at emergency departments and physician offices or remain at home without care.
- As a result, the number of poisonings reported to poison control centers throughout the nation is not a complete picture of the poisoning problem.



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### Module 3

#### Unit 2: Poisoning Statistics & Victims

- More than 65% of exposure cases are managed at home/non-healthcare facility, saving millions of dollars in medical expenses.
- While young children (less than 6 years old) make up a disproportionate percentage of the exposure cases, poisoning affects ALL age groups, from infants to seniors.
- Peak poisoning incidence occurs in one and two year olds, but poisonings in teens and adults are more serious.



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### Module 3

#### Unit 2: Poisoning Statistics & Victims

- Across all ages, majority (76%) of the poison exposures reported to the U.S. poison control centers are unintentional.



- Over 80% of all poison exposures reported to U.S. poison control centers are nontoxic, minimally toxic, or at most have a minor effect.



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### Module 3

#### Unit 2: Poisoning Statistics & Victims

- Pets get poisoned too. Like children, dogs and cats are curious; they have the natural instinct to lick and chew.



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### Module 3

#### Unit 3: Poison Risk Factors and Prevention



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**Module 3**  
**Unit 3: Poison Risk Factors & Prevention**

- There are several risk factors associated with poisoning.
- **The most common risk factors are:**
  - **Lack of supervision**
  - **Improper storage**
  - **Failing to read and follow label directions**



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**Module 3**  
**Unit 3: Poison Risk Factors & Prevention**

- Risk factors for children under 6:
  - Children's curious nature
  - Children's desire to mimic adult behavior
  - Capabilities change with age
  - Inadequate supervision
  - Improper storage
    - **Child-resistant packaging are NOT child proof!**
  - Look-A-Likes
  - Dares



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**Module 3**  
**Unit 3: Poison Risk Factors & Prevention**

- Prevention tips for children under 6:
  - Always Ask First
  - Take medicine from safe adults only
  - Keep all medicines and household products out of reach and locked up high
  - Use the correct measuring device
  - Use child-resistant packaging
  - Never call medicine "candy"
  - Adults shouldn't take medicine in front of children



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**Module 3**  
**Unit 3: Poison Risk Factors & Prevention**

- Risk factors for children 6-12:
  - Independence
  - Inadequate supervision
  - Decision making
  - Understanding label directions
  - Dares
  - Introduction to substance abuse



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**Module 3**  
**Unit 3: Poison Risk Factors & Prevention**

- Prevention tips for children 6-12:
  - Discuss safe use of household products and medicines
  - Ask an adult first
  - Review products labels
  - Supervise a child when taking medication
  - Talk about the dangers of misusing products and medicines
  - Talk about peer pressure and dares



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**Module 3**  
**Unit 3: Poison Risk Factors & Prevention**

- Risk factors for teens:
  - Inability to understand label directions
  - Workplace exposures
  - Stress
  - Peer pressure
  - Substance abuse
  - Suicide
  - Misconceptions about medicine safety
  - Internet



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**Module 3**  
**Unit 3: Poison Risk Factors & Prevention**

- Prevention tips for teens:
  - Encourage teens to come to you with questions
  - Read product labels and follow directions
  - Be aware of changes in behavior
  - Maintain an open dialogue about using certain substances
  - Talk about the proper use of medication
  - Help teens sort through the internet for reputable sources



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**Module 3**  
**Unit 3: Poison Risk Factors & Prevention**

- Risk factors for adults and seniors:
  - Failing to read and follow the directions
  - Drug interactions
  - Workplace exposures
  - Substance abuse
  - Suicide
  - Medication Errors



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**Module 3**  
**Unit 3: Poison Risk Factors & Prevention**

- Prevention tips for adults and seniors:
  - Always read the label
  - Take medicines only as prescribed
  - Do not take or share medicines
  - Keep products in their original containers
  - Keep a list of your medications
  - Fill prescriptions at the same pharmacy
  - Use a medication reminder system
  - Throw away old/expired medicines



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Module 3  
Unit 3: Poison Risk Factors & Prevention

- The poison control center can be a resource.
- Call the Georgia Poison Center if you think you have made a medication error or have used a product in the wrong way.

**1-800-222-1222**

- Do not wait for symptoms to develop.



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Module 3

Unit 4: First Aid and Treatment



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Module 3  
Unit 4: First Aid and Treatment

- Call the GPC immediately to help a poisoned victim

**1-800-222-1222**

- Our staff will provide quick, accurate, and precise poisoning treatment advice



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### Module 3 Unit 4: First Aid and Treatment

• If you think someone has been poisoned, follow these first-aid steps.



- For Swallowed Poisons:
  - Do NOT induce vomiting
  - Call the GPC immediately



- For Inhaled Poisons:
  - Get the victim to fresh air immediately
  - Open all windows and doors
  - Call the GPC



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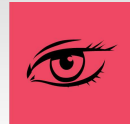
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### Module 3 Unit 4: First Aid and Treatment

- For Poisons on the Skin:
  - Remove all contaminated clothing
  - Rinse the victim's skin with water for 20 minutes
  - Call the GPC



- For Poisons in the Eye:
  - Flush the victim's eye with lukewarm water for 20 minutes
  - Do NOT force the eyelids open
  - Call the GPC



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### Module 3 Unit 3: Poison Risk Factors & Prevention

\*\*\*If a person is non-responsive, has difficulty breathing, is not breathing, or is having seizures call 911 immediately\*\*\*



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### Module 3 Unit 3: Poison Risk Factors & Prevention

- Syrup of Ipecac
  - Plant extract that was used to make a person vomit after ingesting a poison



- It is **NO longer recommended** as a home treatment for poisonings.

American Academy of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



Georgia Poison Center

1.800.222.1222



POISON Help  
1-800-222-1222  
AAPCC



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