

# First Aid for Poisoning

**Prevention** of poisoning is the best path for your safety and health. In addition to danger of the poison, none of the medical procedures or drugs used to treat poisonings is risk-free. Some of the antidotes for poisoning are risky in their own right, and even simple procedures such as pumping a stomach carry a certain level of risk.

In the case of an emergency, try to determine what the person was exposed to and what part of the body was affected before you take action. If the person is unconscious, having trouble breathing, or having convulsions, give needed first aid immediately. Call 911 or your local emergency service. If the person is awake, conscious, not having trouble breathing, and not having convulsions, read the label for first aid instructions and contact the nationwide poison control center toll-free number (1-800-222-1222).

Remember to act fast because speed is crucial! But equally important is taking the right action. In most cases, the hazardous product's label provides you with a "First Aid Instructions" to follow in emergencies. The appropriate first aid treatment depends on the kind of poisoning that has occurred. **If first aid instructions are not available, follow the general guidelines below and/or call the nationwide poison control center or your doctor.**

## Swallowed poison

Call the nationwide poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. If possible, bring the container to the phone. Follow the poison center's advice

## Inhaled poison

Carry or drag victim to fresh air immediately. If you think you need protection such as a respirator and one is not available to you, call 911 and wait for emergency equipment before entering the area. Loosen person's tight clothing. If the person's skin is blue or the person has stopped breathing, give artificial respiration (if you know how) and call 911 for help. Open doors and windows so no one else will be poisoned by fumes.

## Poison in eye

If poison splashes into an eye, remove contact lenses if necessary, hold the eyelid open and wash quickly and gently with clean running water from the tap or a gentle stream from a hose for at least 15 minutes. Eye damage can occur in a few minutes with some types of toxic chemicals. If possible, have someone else contact the nationwide poison control center 1-800-222-1222 for you while the victim is being treated. Do not use eye drops or chemicals or drugs in the wash water.

## **Poison on skin**

Call the nationwide poison control center 1-800-222-1222 if a toxic chemical splashes on the skin. Drench area with water and remove contaminated clothing. Wash skin and hair thoroughly with soap and water. Later, discard contaminated clothing or thoroughly wash it separately from other laundry.