

AT HOME, AT WORK, EVERYWHERE AROUND US, WE ARE COMING INTO A CONTACT WITH A GREAT NUMBER OF CHEMICAL AGENTS IN SPECIFIC FORMS SUCH AS PREPARATIONS USED FOR CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE, MEDICATIONS ETC.

ALL THAT INCREASES THE RISK OF ACCIDENTAL AND DELIBERATE POISONING WITH THOSE SUBSTANCES, AND THAT NUMBER CONTINUES TO RISE EACH YEAR.

ONLY IN BELGRADE, OUR POISON CENTER ANNUALLY RECORDS OVER 4000 POISONINGS BY DRUGS, CHEMICAL AND OTHER POISONOUS AGENTS. VERY OFTEN, AN ACUTE POISONING CAN RESULT FROM THE IMPROPER HANDLING AND INADEQUATE STORING OF THOSE CHEMICAL AGENTS. BASED ON THE NPCC STATISTICAL DATA, THE ANNUAL MORTALITY RATE FOR ACUTE POISONING IS 3% OF ALL REPORTED POISONING CASES.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS WHEN USING THE FOLLOWING SUBSTANCES: DETERGENTS FOR WASHING CLOTHES AND DISHES, CLEANERS SUCH AS BLEACH PRODUCTS, SCALE-REMOVAL PRODUCTS, STOVE CLEANERS, THE SEWER LINE CLEANERS AND DEGREASERS, DRUGS, COSMETIC PRODUCTS, CARBON MONOXIDE RELEASED FROM THE HOME HEATING DEVICES, DISINFECTION PRODUCTS, AIR REFRESHING PRODUCTS, ALCOHOLIC DRINKS, TOBACCO, GAS LAMPS, FIREPLACES, HOME HEATING DEVICES, POISONOUS HOUSE PLANTS, HERBICIDES, INSECTICIDES, RODENTICIDES "RATSBANE", LIGHTENING LIQUIDS, CAR WASHING AND CLEANING PRODUCTS, BENZENE AND OTHER TYPES OF FUEL, ANTI-FREEZING PRODUCTS-ANTIFREEZE, ACCUMULATORS, COLORS AND SIMILAR MEANS.

NATIONAL POISON CONTROL CENTER



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ACUTE POISONING
PREVENTION AND
THE FIRST AID



ACUTE POISONING PREVENTION

If you have children at home or in your neighborhood, specific precautions should be taken to protect them from coming into a possible contact with those chemicals, and, thus, prevent consequential poisoning. Drugs and other chemicals are to be kept exclusively in their original labeled packs and containers. Particularly dangerous may be keeping refill fluids in bottles of refreshing drinks and alcoholic beverages. All chemicals and drugs should be stored and kept in places such as lockers and cupboards that can be closed and locked. You should read the instruction for the use of specific chemicals and warnings about their dangers. Once a year, you should get rid of all remaining unused or expired medications and chemicals. Since there may be some very hazardous chemical substances that are harmful or toxic to living things - humans and animals as well as to the environment, they should not be thrown in the household trash or via the toilet into the sewage system, but disposed of according to the label directions.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT IN ACUTE POISONINGS

If a probable acute poisoning with chemicals and drugs is suspected, we recommend you to call our doctor on duty in the NPCC Toxicology Information Department. In order to enable him/her to give a proper consideration to the case, and provide you with an adequate advisable support, you should give the following information in respect to the incident:

WHO? - his/her age, sex, weight, previous diseases he/she suffered from and his/her occupation if the poisoning has occurred at a working place;

WHAT? - the accurate name of the substance, the manufacturer's name, hazard symbol-signs on chemical products used as a warning of danger, the product content declaration;

HOW? – by ingesting or inhaling, through the skin or eyes;

QUANTITY? – assess the largest possible quantity;

WHEN? – the accurate time or your assessment;

WHAT ELSE? - The first symptoms (for instance: cough, vomiting, tremor, anxiety, apoplexy), have or haven't any measures been taken? (and if so, have they produced any results).

THE FIRST AID

UPON THE INGESTION THROUGH THE MOUTH:

(Only if a poisoned person is conscious): Give him/her some water, tea or juice (1- 2 dcl); if the ingested substance causes foaming from the mouth, he/she should drink water in small sips, while in cases of corrosive substances, water should be taken at the soonest possible time, 30 minutes after the ingestion at the latest); Use activated charcoal, milk or medications to prevent abdominal distention and the formation of foam only after the consultation with a doctor.

UPON INHALATION:

Get him/her into fresh air immediately; particular precautions should be taken in indoor environments because first responders should not endanger their own health and safety; try to keep a poisoned person calm.

IF IN CONTACT WITH THE SKIN:

Take his/her clothes off immediately; rinse the affected skin areas with large amounts of running water; wash intact/unaffected skin areas thoroughly with a soap and water.

IF IN CONTACT WITH THE EYES:

Flush his/her eyes as soon as possible with running water for 10 minutes while keeping his/her eyelids wide open.

IF SOME DISTURBANCES OR THE LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS IS CAUSED:

If a poisoned person is unconscious or his consciousness is impaired, lay him/her down, on the left side bending slightly his/her head downward; call for the emergency help; don't give him/her water to drink; don't try to make him/her vomit.

IF THE PULS AND BREATHING HAS STOPPED: call 194; remove the existing foreign bodies such as artificial jaws, parts of medications or food remaining in the mouth and esophageous after vomiting; release narrow parts of the dress (sleeves and collars); if there is no breathing, try to give mouth-to-mouth breathing (you should be precautionous or avoid giving this type of resuscitation in some cases of poisoning such as in cyanide poisoning which can be detected by a familiar smell of bitter almonds in the mouth);

IF THE HEART HAS STOPPED BEATING

The resuscitation should be conducted according to the actual recommendations (the most crucial id the massage of the chest, by imposing the pressure on the anterior part of the thorax).

RECOMMENDATIONS OVER TELEPHONE LINES:

Activated charcoal: If activated charcoal is not used timely and in a sufficient quality, it might absorb a large amounts of ingested toxins in the gastrointestinal tract. Activated charcoal is the most effective for acute poisonings only if used in the liquid state (as a liquid solution or powder dissolved in water or juice). Tablets and capsules of activated charcoal that can be purchased in a drug-store are not suitable for the use in acute poisoning cases.

Dosing: 0,5 to 1,0 gram per kilogram of the body mass. Preparations for preventing the formation of foam: For the unintentional and deliberate ingestion of detergents, shampoos and similar products that produce foam, drugs containing ingredients working as anti-foaming agents such as Dimethicone and similar (Flatulex®, Espumican®) can be used.

Irritated throat vomiting: it is not recommended any more since it might be very dangerous in cases of deliberate or accidental ingestion of corrosive chemical substances, benzene, oil derivatives and detergents which produce foam.

