

Poison Control Center Finds 93% of Cases Preventable

By PIERRE C. FRALEY
Of The Bulletin Staff

An analysis of 147 cases of accidental poisoning shows that 93 per cent could have been prevented with "reasonable care," according to a public health department report disclosed today. The cases were selected from

among 534 emergency calls that came into the city's new Poison Control Center during May and June. There were no poisoning deaths during that time.

Public Health workers were sent out to investigate the circumstances surrounding the 147 cases. A report on their findings was prepared by Emil A. Tiboni, chief of the accident prevention section of the department.

Causes of Accidents

In nearly half of the cases, the poison had been taken out of its customary storage place and left in another spot.

In another 15 per cent, the poison had been taken out of its original container and stored in one with another label.

A large percentage of the remaining cases might have been prevented if the poison had been stored properly in shelves out of the reach of small children.

A total of 111 out of the 143 cases occurred among children under five years of age. They were attracted by such things as flavored aspirin, camphor, shoe polish and laundry bleach.

The analysis showed that household preparations were responsible for more accidents than medicines. Next came pesticides and then cosmetics.

There were four cases of lead poisoning. All were among small children who chewed leaded paint from window sills and furniture.

Only One Over Age of 44

There was only one case of accidental poisoning in persons over 44 years of age.

The questionnaire given to the Public Health nurse had a place for her to fill in the answer to the question: "Do you think the accidental poisoning was preventable?"

After a thorough investigation the answer was yes in 93 per cent of the cases.

The Poison Control Center was opened in the middle of January. Since that time it has received more than 500 calls for help. Many of the calls turned out to be false alarms, most of them from over-excited parents.

The number is WALnut 2-5525. The phone is manned around the clock by someone qualified to give technical information and advice about antidotes and treatment.

A Calm While A Child Panics

Poison Center Offers

Life-Saving Antidotes

MAR 14 1965

Of The Bulletin Staff

Her seven-month-old child gagged as Mrs. George Saponas spooned a dose of medicine into her tiny mouth. Puzzled, the young North Philadelphia mother, turned to the bottle.

She gasped as she reached for her glasses and examined the label.

The wrong bottle! Her baby had just consumed a quarter ounce of paracetamol, a pain-killer.

What to do in an emergency—Page 35

used to soothe the gums of teething infants. An ounce of it can kill an adult.

The baby's other bottle, was still on the shelf.

Mrs. Saponas, numbed by fear, placed the bottle in the baby's mouth. She had no fear, directed a police car to her home to rush her child to the hospital.

When there was no answer after a few rings, she hung up. He tried Frankford Hospital, and tried Frankford Hospital.

Re-trying . . . Re-trying . . . She cut off again and tried St. Christopher's Hospital. As the phone buzzed repeatedly, called there, briefed the doctor

Mrs. Saponas was crying. She clicked the top of the bottle and begged help. The operator connected her with the city's Poison Information Center, and in a moment, Mrs. Saponas was talking to the one man at Philadelphia best equipped to help her: John H. Watson, pharmacist and poison expert.

First he calmed Mrs. Saponas. "I've never heard such a soothing voice," she said later. "Thank God for him."

Watson told her to feed the baby milk and, when she said the baby had no fear, directed a police car to her home to rush her child to the hospital.

Within 35 minutes the child was in the hands of doctors at St. Christopher's Hospital. As the phone buzzed repeatedly, called there, briefed the doctor

...and she hung up. He repeated his directions to the hospital. As a result, Watson had been called there, briefed the doctor and released him on the case. After that, the child's eyes were closed to be her breathing her breath.

Within 15 minutes the child was in the hands of doctors at St. Francis Hospital. Watson had been called there, briefed the doctor and released him on the case. After that, the child's eyes were closed to be her breathing her breath.

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Enter Offering Life-Saving Antidotes

March 14, 1965

What to Do

Here is what you should do if someone in your home swallows a potentially dangerous substance.

1. Phone your doctor at once at ... (His number)

If he is not available, phone:

POISON INFORMATION CENTER

WA 2-5523 or WA 2-5524

2. Give details of the incident and send the label of the substance swallowed.
3. If you go to a hospital or doctor's office, take with you:

- The original container.
- The remainder of the substance swallowed.
- Vented material for examination.
- 4. If you need emergency transportation, call the Police Information Center to arrange it.

poison and in the interior parts, is a cumulative poison which collects in the body.

PAINT EATING

It is a particular threat to the teething infant who might gnaw it from a window sill, or a crib, a few chips a day over a long period. Nontoxic interior paints have cut the lead hazard substantially, Dr. Rieders said. But in old homes, with layers of paint on the windows, it is still a hazard.

Watson said there are deadly poisons which are seasonal, like mistletoe and holly berries.

HAZARD EATING

Mistletoe berries are very poisonous, he said. "They can kill a child in a matter of days," he said. "They can also cause convulsions of the body."

...and death.

"In the spring, we have a number of plant poisonings," he said. "Many from yew berries and firethorn berries."

Watson said he can't recall a case of poisoning from a plant.

From time to time, he said, a case of poisoning from a plant is reported.

The doctor warned that a case of poisoning from a plant is reported.

...and death.

...and death.

...and death.

...and death.

...and death.

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CAMPAIGN FOR

This is what, Federal, State and local authorities carry on a year-round campaign to educate the public—and that means parents—on the dangers of poisons. The campaign reaches its climax this week, proclaimed "Poison Prevention Week" by the U.S. Department of Health, President Lyndon Johnson, Mayor James H. D. Tate and other officials across the Nation. Some poisonings, like the case of a child who died in a house on a motorcycle, are preventable.

Accidental Poisonings

Accidental poisonings, classified as a major health hazard in the United States today, are the single greatest cause of emergencies in a child's life. Probably the children will die from eating or drinking household products or drugs.

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