

10 Things to Remember this 4th of July Weekend

- Better Safe than Sorry -

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NEWARK, N.J. — June 27, 2013 – Whether traveling or staying at home for the long holiday weekend, the poison experts want you to enjoy your 4th of July celebrations and not spend it in an emergency room. Most poisonings are preventable. Here are some important things to remember.

- When friends and family visit, lock up all of their medications (prescription and over-the-counter). Children, teens and pets die every year because adults (parents, guardians, grandparents, etc) fail to realize the danger of keeping medicines in non-secure medicine cabinets, closets and drawers.
- Jugs containing lamp or torch oil must be stored in locked cabinets away from food and drinks. When accidentally taken by mouth, such lamp or torch oils can enter the lungs causing pneumonia and even death.
 - Lamp and torch oil refill bottles may closely resemble juice containers; the containers and caps are designed similarly, the oils are colorful and fragrant; the liquids are practically identical in appearance with common fruit juices/drinks!
 - Since it is difficult to pour the liquid directly from the refill bottle into the torch, consumers frequently pour the liquid into a plastic or paper cup in order to then transfer it into the torch. This leaves a cup with what appears to be lemonade or apple juice sitting in it making it an invitation for someone to mistakenly ingest the substance with a potentially disastrous outcome. Use a funnel to transfer the fluid; do not use drinking cups to transfer torch lamp oil from the storage bottle to the lamp, lantern or torch.
- Do not cross-contaminate! Cooked foods should not be placed on any unwashed plates/containers that previously held raw meat, poultry, fish, or seafood.
- Cold foods should be kept refrigerated when not being served. Do not let food sit out at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
- Always use sunscreen. Use extra precaution in the sun when taking medications because some medications can increase the chance for severe sunburn even when using sunscreen.
- Eliminate standing water that collects in birdbaths, buckets and containers, old tires, unused pools and roof gutters. Standing water is a perfect breeding ground for mosquitoes.
- Keep all chemicals locked up, out of sight and reach of children and pets. Store all chemicals in their original, clearly-marked container; always use child-resistant caps.
- Make sure all gardening, lawn care products, and pool products are stored in locked cabinets.
- Do not pick plants/mushrooms to eat from your backyard or fields. Even experts are often fooled by look-alikes which are toxic.
- Program the Poison Help line (800-222-1222) into your cell phone and post it near your home and office phones.

If an exposure occurs, it's good to know help is just a phone call away. If someone is unconscious, not breathing, seizing/convulsing, bleeding profusely, difficult to arouse/wake up, etc. call 911 immediately, otherwise call the NJ Poison Center at 800-222-1222.