

# TOXALERT

## 2000 Statistical Report

Special Issue

July 2001

**New  
Emergency Number  
800-222-1222**

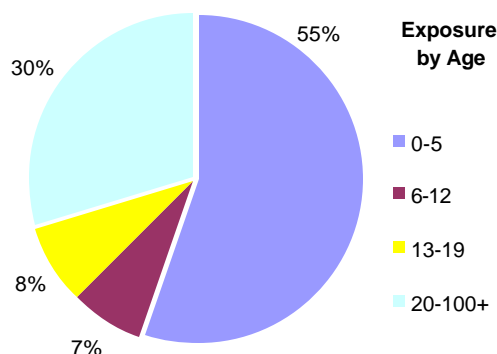
A Newsletter of the  
**MARYLAND  
POISON CENTER**

Saving Lives;  
saving dollars is  
one of the simple  
ways of stating  
some of what the  
Maryland Poison  
Center does.

This report  
provides an  
overview of the  
experience of the  
Maryland Poison  
Center during  
2000.

The Maryland Poison Center (MPC) is a division of the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy and is certified by the American Association of Poison Control Centers as a regional poison center for Maryland. In addition, the MPC serves as a consultation center for the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems. This report presents an overview of MPC poisoning data for 2000. In 2000, the MPC received 57,306 calls. While 35,270 of these calls involved a human exposure, the remaining 22,036 were requests for information or animal poisonings.

The majority of poison exposures involve children under the age of six as shown in the chart below.



### GENDER

Examination of the calls for gender shows **49%** male, **50%** female and **1%** unknown.

### Animal Exposures

Although the majority of calls to the MPC involve people, many calls involve animals. In 2000, a total of 2,346 animal exposures were reported.

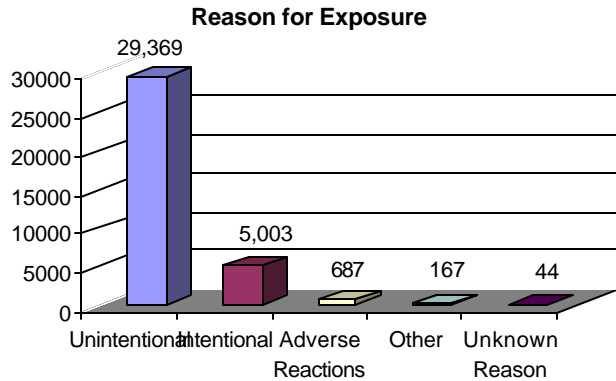
County	Human Exposures	%
Allegany	493	1.40
Anne Arundel	4,776	13.54
Baltimore	5,813	16.48
Baltimore (City)	5,179	14.68
Calvert	634	1.80
Caroline	225	0.64
Carroll	1,365	3.87
Cecil	788	2.23
Charles	770	2.18
Dorchester	225	0.64
Frederick	1,553	4.40
Garrett	200	0.57
Harford	2,103	5.96
Howard	1,897	5.38
Kent	149	0.42
Montgomery	2,244	6.36
Prince George's	2,109	5.98
Queen Anne's	290	0.82
Saint Mary's	744	2.11
Somerset	93	0.26
Talbot	341	0.97
Washington	1,003	2.84
Wicomico	598	1.70
Worcester	361	1.02
Unknown	1,317	3.73
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,270</b>	<b>100.00</b>

For additional information, send an email to [banderso@rx.umaryland.edu](mailto:banderso@rx.umaryland.edu) or visit our website at [www.pharmacy.umaryland.edu/~mpc/](http://www.pharmacy.umaryland.edu/~mpc/).

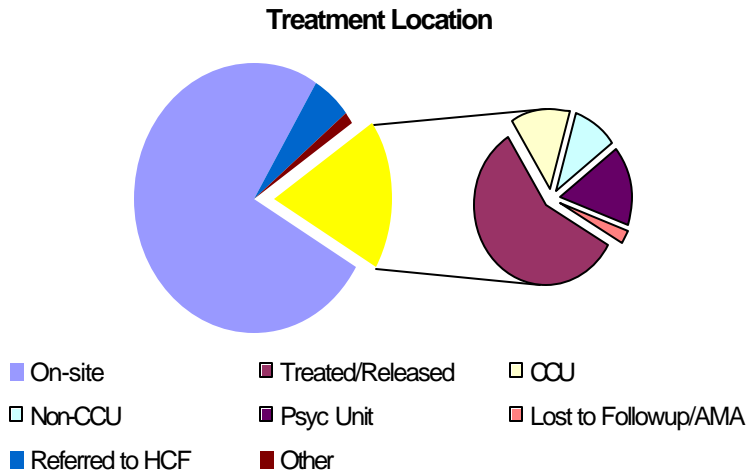
### Circumstance

Acute exposures accounted for 95% of the total calls, acute-on-chronic were 4% and chronic exposures accounted for 1% of calls.

The people who call the MPC have several different reasons for their exposures. The graph to the right shows **Unintentional** exposures which could be occupational, environmental, bite/sting, or others; **Intentional** exposures, which could be due to misuse or abuse; **Adverse Reactions** to food or drugs; **Other** which includes malicious or contaminant/tampering; and **Unknown**.



### MPC Safely Manages Patients at Home

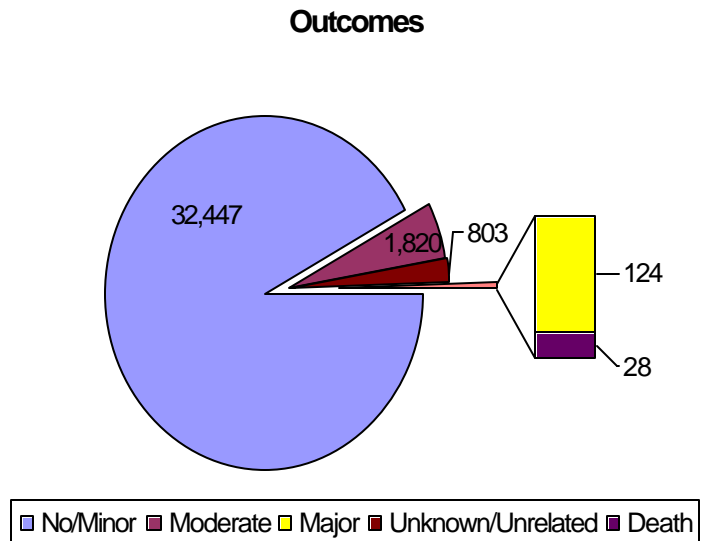


In 2000, over 75% of all poisoning cases were safely managed at home (on site). The graph to the left describes where the cases were managed. Safely managing patients at home saves millions of dollars in unnecessary health care costs. It also allows more efficient and effective use of limited health care resources. By calling the Maryland Poison Center, we can help save lives and save dollars.

### Outcomes

The true story of the effectiveness of the MPC program is measured in outcomes. Over 92% of all cases reported to the MPC resulted in either no effect or only minor effects. As shown in the graphic to the right, few cases had poor outcomes. There were 28 poisoning cases reported to the Maryland Poison Center that resulted in death (< 0.08%).

Our mission is to decrease the cost and complexity of care while maintaining and or improving patient outcomes. This data clearly shows that we're meeting our mission.



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## Substances Involved in Poisonings

### Drug Substances

Analgesics	4,298
Anticonvulsants	692
Antidepressants	1,875
Antihistamines	1,107
Antimicrobials	1,060
Asthma therapies	294
Cardiovascular drugs	1,057
Cough & cold preparations	1,655
Electrolytes/minerals	380
Eye, ear, nose, throat	216
Gastrointestinal	870
Hormone	843
Muscle relaxants	343
Sedatives	1,993
Stimulants/street drugs	700
Topicals	1,852
Vitamins	916
Miscellaneous	1,337
<b>Total Drug Substances</b>	<b>21,488</b>

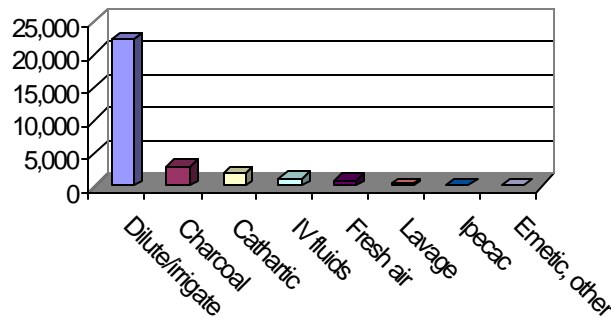
### Non-Drug Substances

Adhesives	303
Alcohols	1,189
Arts & Crafts	1,115
Automotive	204
Bites & Stings	699
Chemicals	728
Cleaning	3,571
Cosmetics/Personal Care	4,140
Deodorizers	322
Fertilizers	217
Food	551
Foreign bodies	2,034
Fumes/gases	395
Hydrocarbons	821
Insecticides	959
Paint	393
Plants	1,758
Polishes	123
Rodenticides	422
Miscellaneous	1,372
<b>Total non-drug substances</b>	<b>21,316</b>

The tables on the left list the substances that were most frequently responsible for poisonings in Maryland during 2000. Please note that there are more substances documented here than there are poisoning patients reported. That's because patients can be exposed to more than one substance in a poisoning event.

The table at right describes the decontamination performed for poisoning victims. Most patients were managed conservatively with dilution/irrigation. Dilution is generally done for ingested toxins; irrigation is performed for topical exposures (example: splash exposures to the eye).

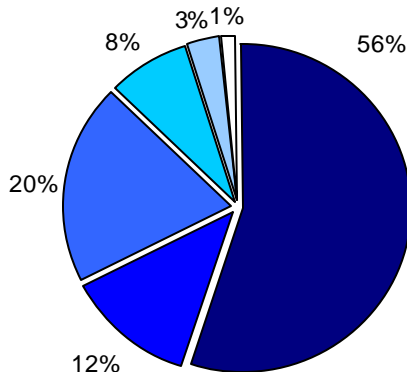
### Decontamination



### Route of Exposure

#### Route of Exposure

- Oral
- Ocular
- Dermal
- Inhalation
- Bite/Sting
- Other



By far the most common way that poisoning patients in Maryland get exposed to toxins is from ingestion. This includes cases of children putting toxic substances in their mouths, patients mistakenly ingesting someone else's medicines, people accidentally brushing their teeth with a product intended for topical use. Eye exposures were the next most common route of exposure.

For all exposures, prompt attention is the best way to reduce the likelihood of developing severe toxicity. Whenever you have a poisoning question, call the experts at the Maryland Poison Center.

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**MARYLAND POISON CENTER**

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[www.pharmacy.umaryland.edu/~mpc/](http://www.pharmacy.umaryland.edu/~mpc/)

**TOXALERT Year 2000****Maryland Poison Center  
Advisory Board**

The following individuals gave their time and energies to provide guidance and support.

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