

# Poison Prevention Press

January/February 2020

Volume 13, Issue 1

## March 15-21, 2020 is Poison Prevention Week

Take this time to help make your world poison safe:

- Program 1-800-222-122 into your mobile phone. Text "POISON" to 797979 and save/share the contact card
- [Request a poison information packet](#) for your home
- [Order educational materials](#) for a group
- Use our [home safety checklist](#) to make sure your home is poison safe
- Watch and share our [educational videos](#)
- Download and print our [activity sheets](#) to make learning about poison prevention fun for kids

## Did you know that...

- According to U.S. News, each year 1.3 million smokers quit smoking?
- The DEA collected a record 12,238 pounds of medicine in Maryland on National Prescription Drug Take Back Day in October 2019?

Follow the MPC on  
[Facebook](#) & [Twitter](#)

## Poison Safety and New Year's Resolutions

Happy New Year! Whether you've made a new resolution or are rededicating yourself to a resolution you made last year (or many years ago), poison safety can impact the steps you take to achieve your goals. Take a look at the tips provided below to help keep you, your family, and your house poison safe this year.

### Resolution #1: Quit Smoking

Nicotine gum, patches, and other methods are often used, but can be harmful if used in the wrong way or by the wrong person. These items should not be kept somewhere a child could reach, such as a purse or backpack. Children can easily mistake nicotine gum for regular chewing gum, potentially leading to a nicotine overdose. Many people believe that e-cigarettes and vapes are a safer alternative or way to quit smoking, but there is no evidence to support this at this time. The liquids can contain high concentrations of nicotine, keep them up, away, and out of sight. Remember, nicotine is a stimulant drug, regardless of the form it takes.

### Resolution #2: Lose Weight

Over-the-counter weight loss supplements are widely available. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not review these supplements for safety and effectiveness before they are put on the market. These products are sometimes made with [hidden active ingredients](#) that are unsafe, and are not safe for all people to consume, as they can cause unwanted effects. The [FDA suggests](#) that people talk with their doctor before starting any supplement. If you choose to add a supplement to your daily regimen, pay close attention to the dosing and instructions on the label. Taking more will not help you lose weight faster.

### Resolution #3: Regularly Clean the House

Always supervise children around cleaning supplies. Remember, they like to imitate adult behavior and may join you. When older children begin to help you clean, teach them the proper way to use the product, how to read the label, and how to follow the directions on the label. Keep products up, away, and out of sight after use. Many cleaning products have the potential to cause unwanted effects if they are inhaled, get in the mouth or eye, or get on the skin. Products such as oven cleaners, toilet bowl cleaners, soap scum removers, and drain openers can cause more severe effects and are best stored in a locked cabinet.

### Resolution #4: Keep the Medicine Cabinet Clean and Safe

Friends and family who live in or visit your home may seek medicine in your cabinet. Do not keep unused or expired medicines in your home. If your doctor instructs you to stop taking a medicine, promptly dispose of it. There are [permanent drop-off locations](#) around Maryland. If you would rather dispose of medicines at home, we have [simple instructions](#) for safe disposal on our website.

Here's to a happy and healthy 2020. If you suspect a poisoning or overdose, call the experts at 1-800-222-1222 right away. Don't wait for symptoms. Your call is free and confidential.