

# what's your Poison?

A quarterly update from the Kentucky Poison  
Control Center of Norton Children's Hospital



## Medication Safety

Cold and flu season is in full force this time of year, which means often there is someone in your household taking medication. Follow these simple tips to keep your family safe:

- Keep medicines (as well as vitamins and supplements) in the containers they came in.
- Store medications up and out of reach of children.
- Tell your doctor about all medicines you are taking. Be sure to mention prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
- Read the label before taking or giving medicine every time.
- Never take other people's prescription drugs (or share your prescription drugs with friends or family).
- Never call medicine "candy" when giving it to children.



## Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a gas that you cannot see, taste or smell. The most common causes of carbon monoxide in the home are malfunctioning furnaces, fireplaces or wood stoves.

- Make sure you have a carbon monoxide detector on every floor of your house, especially near sleeping rooms.
- Never use a gas range, oven or charcoal grill to heat a home.
- Never leave the motor running in a vehicle parked in an enclosed or partially enclosed space, such as a garage.
- Never run a generator inside a garage or other enclosed structure, even if the doors or windows are open.

If CO poisoning is suspected, consult a health care professional right away.

For more information about Carbon Monoxide safety:

[CDC](#)

[Safe Kids Worldwide](#)

## Winter Food Safety

### If the Power Goes Out:

- Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed and open them only when necessary.
- If power is restored within four hours, items in the refrigerator should be safe to eat. A full freezer should stay at freezing temperatures for up to two days if the door remains constantly closed. A half-full freezer should stay at freezing temperatures for up to one day if the door remains closed.

### Once Power is Restored:

- Check the temperature inside your refrigerator and freezer. If it has risen to 45°F or higher, discard any meat, poultry, fish, dairy and egg products, soft cheese, cooked beans, cooked rice, cooked potatoes, cooked pasta, potato salad, pudding or any other potentially spoiled foods.
- Allow time for the refrigerator to reach below 40°F before restocking.
- When in doubt, throw it out.

## Antifreeze

- Antifreeze is a poisonous liquid used in cars. It has a sweet taste. Children and animals like its taste. If even a little is swallowed, it can be harmful.
- Keep antifreeze and all strong chemicals in their original containers and store them up and out of reach of children.

## Salt

- If eaten, salt used on driveways and sidewalks in winter can harm a pet or child.
- Store such salt as you would any other poison. Keep it in a sealed, marked container and store it up and out of reach of children.

## We're Always Open!

Even when there are severe winter storms, you can always call **1-800-222-1222** and reach the poison control center.

Kentucky Regional Poison Control Center  
PO Box 35070  
Louisville, KY 40232  
[www.krpsc.com](http://www.krpsc.com)

For poisoning information and emergencies: 1-800-222-1222

