

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  **Contact:** Kristie Edelen

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**The Oklahoma Poison Center Brings Oklahomans Together in a Celebration of Awareness of National Poison Prevention Week**

Oklahoma City - As part of National Poison Prevention Week (NPPW), The Oklahoma Poison Center asks all Oklahomans to add the 1-800-222-1222 Poison Helpline number into their phone contacts. National Poison Prevention Week will take place March 17-23, 2024. The theme is “When the unexpected happens, Poison Help is here for you 24/7.”

“Whether you have general questions or an emergency, the Poison Helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at no cost to you. You can call the Poison Helpline with questions about medications, cleaning products, insect bites, and any other toxin or chemical you can think of” says poison center managing director, Kristie Edelen. In 2023 the Oklahoma Poison Center managed 95% of human exposure cases at home that originated in the home setting. The average emergency room visit in Oklahoma was estimated to cost at least $1,000, and therefore, the Oklahoma Poison Center saved Oklahomans $11.4 million in 2023.

Poisoning remains the leading cause of injury-related death in the U.S. More people die of poisoning every year than gun or car-related injuries. In 2023, U.S. Poison Centers responded to more than 2 million exposure cases, resulting on average a case every 11 seconds. The Oklahoma Poison Center received a total of 34,983 poison-related calls and placed another 33,137 follow-up calls to ensure patient safety and verify outcome.

Established in 1961 by Congress, National Poison Prevention Week originated to raise awareness of poison prevention and safety. NPPW is observed every year during the third week in March and focuses on the danger of drugs and other poisons and how to keep your family safe. Observed for more than 60 years, NPPW activities are a great way to start a conversation at home. We hope you will join the Oklahoma Poison Center in spreading awareness of poison dangers and prevention.

**Call the Oklahoma Poison Center with any questions or concerns regarding toxins, chemicals, or medications that arise, and do not forget to save the poison center’s phone number, (800) 222-1222, in your phone.**

Pharmacists and registered nurses at the poison center are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Please do not email the poison center or a member of the poison center staff, as poisoning emergencies are not handled through email. The Oklahoma Poison Center is a program of the University of Oklahoma College of Pharmacy at OU Health Sciences. For more information, visit [OklahomaPoison.org](https://oklahomapoison.org/).

**The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences**
The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences is one of the nation’s few academic health centers with all health professions colleges — Allied Health, Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, Graduate Studies and School of Community Medicine. OU Health Sciences serves approximately 4,000 students in more than 70 undergraduate and graduate degree programs on campuses in Oklahoma City and Tulsa and is the academic and research partner of OU Health, the state’s only comprehensive academic healthcare system. OU Health Sciences is ranked 129 out of over 2,849 institutions in funding received from the National Institutes of Health, according to the Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research. For more information, visit [ouhsc.edu.](https://www.ouhsc.edu/)