

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** **Contact:** Kristie Edelen, Pharm.D., DABAT

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**SAFER THANKSGIVING GATHERINGS**

***Tips Provided by the Oklahoma Poison Center***

[OKLAHOMA CITY, OK, November 21, 2022] – As families gather during Thanksgiving, they may not be as diligent about locking up medications and household cleaners as they normally are throughout the year.

“Last year, we received 283 calls during the week of Thanksgiving regarding medication exposures, with an additional 217 calls about other substances found around the home such as household cleaners and personal care products.” noted Kristie Edelen, Assistant Managing Director of the Oklahoma Center for Poison and Drug Information, adding that while the number of calls remains fairly consistent from year to year, many of these exposures are preventable.

Tips for preventing or dealing with any poisonings during your Thanksgiving festivities:

Entertaining guests in your home? Keep anything that might be dangerous to children, pets, or visitors up, away and out of sight. Here are some items to consider:

* Medicine – You may have guests staying with you during the holidays. Provide guests with a safe place to store their medication. Traveling with a pill organizer may be convenient, but these organizers are easy to open and attractive to young children.
* Button batteries – Be sure to check new electronic toys and gifts for button batteries and small coin-shaped batteries. They can be extremely dangerous if swallowed. Be sure they are tightly secured and not accessible to children.
* Edible marijuana products – Children can’t tell the difference between edible marijuana products and other cookies and candies in the home. Always keep marijuana-containing products up, away, and out of sight of young children.
* Cleaning products – Children can’t tell the difference between cleaning products and the juice that is given to them commonly. Always keep cleaning products locked in a secure cabinet out of sight of young children.
* Save the Poison Help number (1-800-222-1222) in your cell phone. Calls are free and confidential.

Tips to Prevent Food Poisoning:

* Wash your hands and work surfaces before, during, and after preparing food. Germs can survive in many places around your kitchen, including your hands, utensils, cutting boards, and countertops.
* Separate raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs from ready-to-eat foods. Use separate cutting boards and keep raw meat away from other foods in your shopping cart and refrigerator.
* Cook food to the right internal temperature to kill harmful bacteria. Use a food thermometer to ensure the correct temperature
* Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours of cooking.

Pharmacists and registered nurses at the poison center are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at (800) 222-1222 even on Thanksgiving Day. 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 Center for Poison and Drug Information is a program of the University of Oklahoma College of Pharmacy at the OU Health Sciences Center. For more information, log on to www.oklahomapoison.org.

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