Storing chemicals outdoors

- keep all chemicals like paint, white spirit, oil for the car, weed-killers and pesticides high up out of reach and out of sight

- fit a padlock to the cupboard, shed or garage where they are kept

- keep all chemicals in their original, labelled containers – do not be tempted to put them into another, bottle or container – it’s confusing, even for adults, and if it is in a container that a child recognises, such as a lemonade or water bottle, they could drink it by mistake.

In the garden

- teach your child never to eat plants or berries from the garden without showing them to you first. Make sure you can recognise common harmful plants.
First aid

If you think your child has swallowed something harmful:

for medicines

👩️‍⚕️ **DO check** if the child really took the medicine - if it's tablets, look on the floor and round about. It may be a false alarm

👩️‍⚕️ **DO find** the bottle or a sample tablet

👩️‍⚕️ **DO get** advice from your pharmacist, doctor, NHS Direct [tel: 0845 4647] or accident & emergency department at your local hospital

👩️‍⚕️ **DON'T give** your child salt water to make them sick.

for chemicals

👩‍⚕️ **DO find** the bottle or packet and take it with you if you go to hospital

👩‍⚕️ **DO get** advice from your pharmacist, doctor, NHS Direct [tel: 0845 4647] or accident & emergency department at your local hospital

👩‍⚕️ **DON'T give** the child anything to drink - just wet their lips with cold water if they are burning

👩‍⚕️ **DON'T try** to make the child sick - their vomit will cause damage if it goes into their lungs

👩‍⚕️ If the child is unconscious or there is burning to the mouth, dial 999 immediately to call an ambulance.

capt is a charity committed to reducing childhood injury.

18-20 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3HA
.tell 020 7608 3838  f 020 7608 3674
.e safety@capt.org.uk  w www.capt.org.uk

registered charity number 108034
© Child Accident Prevention Trust 2023
SEA211 - rev. revision 22.12.02
what might poison your child?

a safety guide for parents and carers of young children
Every year around 37,000 children under 14 go to hospital because it is believed they have swallowed something harmful. The vast majority of these children are under five years old.

Find out how taking a few simple safety measures can prevent your child swallowing something harmful.

Medicines – general tips

- look for bottles with child resistant caps when buying medicines, vitamins or other remedies over the counter. Keep the caps on the bottles and put medicines away immediately after use
- keep all medicines in their original containers so it is clear what is in them and so that they are difficult for young children to open
- take extra care with tablets in packs you can see through or brightly coloured tablets – they are especially tempting to children
- don’t count out your tablets for the day and then leave them lying around
- take your medicine when your child isn’t around so they don’t try to copy you
- teach your child about the safe use of medicines and never pretend they are sweets
- take left over medicines to your local chemist for them to dispose of safely
- be especially careful when visiting relatives or friends – they may not follow your safety rules.
Storing medicines

Keep medicines well out of reach and out of sight of young children – this could be a high cupboard or a cupboard fitted with a child resistant catch, a lockable medicine cabinet or even a locked suitcase.

In particular:

Women don’t keep them on your bedside table – your child can easily slip into your bedroom without being seen

Women don’t keep them in a handbag – this is a favourite place for toddlers to find tablets

Women don’t keep them in the fridge – ‘keep cool’ usually means ‘keep away from warm places like beside radiators or in direct sunlight’. If a medicine should be kept in the fridge it will say so. If it does, keep it as high up and hidden as possible.
Household chemicals and products
- general tips

- look for containers with child resistant caps. Some products also contain a bittering agent that makes them taste very unpleasant.

- remember that cigarettes, alcohol and perfume, aromatherapy oils and mouthwash can also be poisonous to children.

- never strip old furniture or paintwork when there are young children or pregnant women at home. The dust may contain lead which is harmful.

Storing household chemicals and products

- store all household chemicals and cleaning products out of sight and in cupboards with child resistant catches. Keep them high up and out of reach – never store them under the sink or on the floor by the toilet.

- move products out of reach if you are called away while using them, for example, if the phone rings while you are cleaning the toilet.

- remember, everyday products like dishwasher powder may seem attractive to a child – don’t leave the dishwasher door open with the powder in – little fingers can soon be into it.

- dispose of empty containers safely.