



## Holiday Hazards

The holiday season is a time for celebration and happiness. However, the combination of excited children and hurried parents may turn a safe home into a likely site for a poisoning. Research shows that the number of poisoning incidents involving children rises during the holiday season. Common calls to the poison center during this time include cigarettes, disc batteries, food poisoning, holiday plants and ingestion of guests' medications by young children. The Nebraska Regional Poison Center offers the following tips for preparing your home during the holiday season:

- Use caution when using bubble lights, angel hair, snow sprays, and fireplace color crystals.
- Keep hazardous plants, decorations, medications and gifts out of the reach of small children or pets.
- Clean up immediately following all holiday parties so that alcohol and other potentially harmful items are not within reach of young children. Children often imitate adults and they will drink partially filled glasses regardless of the contents.
- Keep safety in mind when shopping for toys. Check age recommendations for toys and refer to the Consumer Product Safety Commission for toys on the recalled- toys list. ([www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov))
- Be cautious of toys purchased at dollar stores, street fairs, vending machines, thrift stores or yard sales.
- Beware of toys containing small magnets, cheap metal jewelry and any toy that can be broken into small pieces and cause a choking hazard.
- Certain Christmas tree light cords contain lead warnings. Older artificial Christmas trees may contain small amounts of lead. It is reasonable to wash your hands after handling these cords and trees and keep them out of the hands of children.
- Post the telephone number of the Nebraska Regional Poison Center and your family physician near the phone.
- If you suspect a poisoning has occurred, call the Nebraska Regional Poison Center or your physician before attempting any emergency treatment.

Remember, prevention is the best treatment for poisonings. The Nebraska Regional Poison Center offers tips on holiday safety and poison prevention as a free community service. If you have questions or would like to set up an interview, contact the Nebraska Regional Poison Center by calling (800) 222-1222 or (402) 955-5555 in the Omaha metropolitan area.

The Nebraska Regional Poison Center is sponsored by The Nebraska Medical Center and the University of Nebraska Medical Center.