

## Seasonal Hazards – Warm Weather



Beginning with warm weather's first breeze and continuing until cold weather again forces them back inside, most children are like Tom Sawyer - spending as much time as they can outdoors. Help make these times of fond memories rather than the source of painful experiences.

**Lawn Care Products:** Chemicals like pesticides, fertilizers and other gardening products are very toxic. They require extreme caution while they are being used and when decisions are made about their storage and their disposal. Use protective covering while applying. Always store these products in their original containers in a place where kids and pets are not allowed to go. Always read the labels before using these products and follow directions carefully!

**Plants:** Many outdoor and indoor plants are poisonous. Children are attracted to plants by their colorful flowers and berries, which can be toxic. Identify the plants, bushes, and flowers in your yard and inside your home. Consider mushrooms found in one's yard to be toxic. Teach children not to put plants, plant parts, berries or mushrooms in their mouth. Poisonous and non-poisonous mushrooms can look very similar; often only an expert can tell the difference. Contact the Poison Center at **1-800-222-1222** for a list of toxic and non-toxic plants.

**Spring Cleaning:** When storing winter woollens, be aware that those mothballs are poisonous. Keep them out of the reach of children. Always keep an eye on children when using household cleaners. Most poisonings happen while using everyday products. Be aware of where you putting down that glass cleaner or the measured-out bleach when answering the phone or someone is at the door.

Washing your hands often with soap and water is the best defense against germs! As an alternative, hand sanitizers could be used. Hand sanitizers contain a lot of alcohol which is harmful to children when ingested as they put their hands in their mouth. This product is also highly flammable. People have burned their hands as they were lighting a candle, cigarette or starting a fire/grill right after applying it. Make sure everyone's hands are air-dried completely after using this product!



**Petroleum based products (gasoline, kerosene, tiki-torch fluid, charcoal lighter fluid):** these products are extremely toxic! Usually used for generators, lawn mowers, cars and for entertainment during outdoor cookouts. Store these products in a place where children **do not have access**. **Never** keep non-food items in food containers. Adults, as well as children have been poisoned drinking gasoline or motor oil from a bottle they thought contained pop/soda and had mistaken tiki-torch fluid for apple juice.

**Carbon Monoxide (CO) - the silent killer:** Carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels (like gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil, and methane) burn incompletely. With the warming weather, there come tornadoes, thunderstorms and hail. Any of these elements could knock down power lines, forcing people to use back-up generators. Heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel are potential sources of carbon monoxide. Vehicles, grills or generators running in attached garages can also produce dangerous levels of CO, even if the garage door is open. **Every home should have at least one working carbon monoxide detector placed close to bedrooms** (you can buy it at local hardware stores or supermarkets).



**Symptoms:** *severe headaches; becoming dizzy, confused, nauseated; the person could faint or even die. Low levels can cause sleepiness, shortness of breath, mild nausea, mild headaches, and may have long-term effects on your health. Since many of these symptoms are similar to those of the flu, food poisoning, or other illnesses, you may not think that carbon monoxide poisoning could be the reason. Often, several members of the same family or those in the same building will complain of similar symptoms.*

## POISON WATCH

**Hiking & Camping:** How much fun is spending a weekend with family? A visit with “Mother Nature” is exciting for grownups and kids. So is for critters and pests. Use bug sprays as directed to keep away insects from exposed skin. Make sure there is no leftover food on your camp site that could be inviting crawling visitors. Wear appropriate shoes/boots and tuck in your pants to assure a safe hike in the woods. Bee stings, snake bites and similar nuisances are preventable like most other poisonings, however, when it happens, most people don't think about calling a poison center. To get help fast, a quick call to 1-800-222-1222 will get you in touch with medical experts right away.

**Food Safety:** It's grilling time! A lot of outdoor parties include tasty hamburgers, hot dogs, steaks and other tasty things cooked on the grill. Use food thermometers to make sure that all meat products are cooked to the proper temperature. Cheese gauze or other light mesh materials are great to cover things on the picnic table for protection against flying insects. Use a table cover to protect against crawling critters.



Store raw meat in the refrigerator until you are ready to grill. Remove the meat 20 minutes before grilling to allow it to come to room temperature. Marinate meat in the refrigerator, not on the countertop.

- Trim excess fat from meat to avoid flare-ups.
- Never use cooking sprays around a lit grill.
- Make sure your grill is hot before adding the meat. *Allow about 10 minutes for a gas grill to heat up and about 30 to 40 minutes if you are using charcoal.*

### Grilling Guides

- ◆ Don't place cooked meat back on the plates or bowls that held the raw meat. For quick cleanup, try covering the plate with foil before placing raw meat on the plate; once the meat is on the grill, remove and discard the foil. You have a clean plate for serving.
- ◆ Boil any leftover marinade that touched raw meat (including what was used for basting) for at least one minute before reusing.
- ◆ Use a meat thermometer to make sure that the meat has reached a safe internal temperature. (See "How Hot Should It Be?" below.) Color and feel are not accurate ways to check doneness. Make sure the thermometer isn't touching any bone, as this could give a false reading.

### How Hot Should It Be?

Here's a quick reference for the minimum safe temperature any cut of meat should reach – whether it's cooked in the oven or on a grill.

Beef (ground): 160°F	Beef (steaks and roasts): 145°F
Chicken: 165°F	Turkey: 165°F
Pork: 160°F	Lamb: 150°F

**ALWAYS refrigerate leftovers promptly!**

**While the Central Ohio Poison Center is promoting poison safety and prevention year around, remember: poisonings can happen to anybody at any time ...**

**For every poisoning, here is the antidote:** Call 1-800-222-1222 and talk with a poison center expert about the best way to treat the incident. Specially-trained pharmacists, nurses and doctors are ready to help you fast, free of charge, every day, 24/7. We understand that your privacy is important - we keep your information to ourselves.

