

Utah Poison Control Center
585 Komas Drive
Salt Lake City, Utah 84108
1-800-222-1222



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The Truth about Ipecac

For many years ipecac syrup was recommended to induce vomiting as a treatment for children who had ingested certain poisonous substances. People were advised to keep a bottle of ipecac on hand in case of an unintentional poisoning. However, because there are no studies showing that the use of ipecac syrup improves the outcome of the poisoned patient and it is known to be abused by persons with eating disorders, the American Academy of Pediatrics no longer recommends use of ipecac syrup.

What should you do?

- Keep potential poisons out of sight and reach of children
- Do not use ipecac and safely dispose of expired bottles of ipecac syrup
- Do not attempt to treat a poisoning without first contacting the Poison Control Center or your doctor
- Contact the Poison Control Center if a poisoning occurs 1-800-222-1222



For poison exposures call
1-800-222-1222

“Natural” Does Not Always Mean Safe

Americans are using herbal remedies and other dietary supplements in increasing numbers. Many people believe that if a product is “natural,” then it must also be “safe” at any dose. This is not always true. Many of the prescription and non-prescription medications we use today are derived from natural products, especially plants. However, many plant constituents are very potent and some can be deadly if prepared inappropriately or taken in too high a dose. It is important that consumers of any medicine or dietary supplement understand the proper dosing, possible side effects and potential interactions with other medications, dietary supplements and disease states.

Supplements are not regulated in the same manner as prescription and non-prescription medications. Prescription and non-prescription medications have to demonstrate both safety and efficacy to the FDA prior to marketing. A dietary supplement does not have to follow the same standards. The burden of proof is on the FDA to demonstrate that a dietary supplement is not safe.

If consumers wish to use an herbal or dietary supplement, they should select products from manufacturers they know and trust. Differences in growing conditions and processing of herbs may affect their specific actions in the body and there may be differences in potency and quality from batch to batch and manufacturer to manufacturer. Be aware that not all claims made on herbal products and dietary supplements can be substantiated.

Checklist

- Tell your doctor if you are taking herbal or dietary supplements
- Know what you are taking and why you are taking it
- Do not take more than the recommended amount
- If you have questions about the use of herbal products contact your doctor or pharmacist.

If you have questions about adverse effects or toxicity contact the poison center at 1-800-222-1222

