

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

March 18, 2024

For immediate release

Alberta Blue Cross® and the Injury Prevention Centre highlight danger of medication poisoning

National Poison Prevention Week is March 17 to 23, and Alberta Blue Cross is partnering with the Alberta Injury Prevention Centre to raise awareness of the dangers of unintentional poisoning—particularly medication poisoning among children.

Every year, Alberta Poison and Drug Information Services (PADIS) receives more than 9,500 calls relating to children 0 to 5 years of age. That’s approximately 27 calls a day.

“We know that about 6 out of 10 child poisonings treated in Alberta children’s hospitals are related to medication,” says Dr. Kathy Belton, director of the Injury Prevention Centre based in the University of Alberta’s School of Public Health.

Of these poisonings, more than a third involve common pain relievers like acetaminophen and ibuprofen.

“With prevention in mind, we’re asking parents and caregivers to take a moment this week to ensure that all medications in their homes are locked and stored safely out of reach of little hands,” adds Brian Geislinger, senior vice-president of Corporate Relations and Community Engagement with Alberta Blue Cross.

Here are some tips to follow for poison prevention:

- Prevention starts with information—parents and caregivers must ensure they follow the medication amount and timing between doses stated on all medication labels. Review medication recommendations around storage—including temperature and location.
- Don’t leave medications unattended on bedside tables, kitchen counters or anywhere they can be accessed by children. Also be aware of medication visitors may have in their purses, coat pockets and bags—ensure these are kept out of children’s reach.
- Child-resistant containers are not *childproof*. Lock up items including medicine and vitamins as well as other potentially poisonous items such as household cleaning supplies and cannabis products in cupboards or boxes.
- Never call medicine “candy.”

Alberta Blue Cross and the Injury Prevention Centre have a long-standing partnership to support the wellness of Albertans through injury prevention education. This includes creating booklets for older adults on keeping well, staying active and preventing falls.

For more information on medication poisoning prevention and free, downloadable resources, [visit the Injury Prevention Centre website](#).

About Alberta Blue Cross

As the largest provider of health benefits in Alberta, we believe we have the potential and responsibility to impact people's lives for the better. We believe all communities should thrive, and we are committed to serving as a champion for wellness by promoting the health of Albertans.

About Injury Prevention Centre

The Injury Prevention Centre has supported organizations, communities and individuals to take actions to reduce their risk of injury for over 20 years in Alberta. By focusing on preventing injuries, we save lives and keep Albertans out of emergency rooms and hospital beds. We work as connectors, providers and leaders committed to our vision of ensuring that "Albertans work and play hard, free from life-limiting injuries."

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