Prescription for safety

According to a 2012 report released by Safe Kids Worldwide, about 165 kids are treated each day in U.S. emergency rooms for accidental poisoning from medicines.

Among young children, 95 percent of emergency visits for unintentional medication overdose are caused by a child ingesting medicine while unsupervised. The remaining 5 percent are because of dosing errors made by caregivers.

These emergency room visits could be prevented. While the overall number of child deaths from poisoning has been cut in half since the late 1970s, medicine is now responsible for more of those poison-related deaths.

Contributing factors to this trend:
• More medicines are in the home, including prescription and over-the-counter drugs, dietary supplements, vitamins and herbal remedies.
• Children have greater access to grandparents’ medicines in households where multiple generations live.
• Multiple caregivers don’t coordinate on the timing of children’s dosages.
• Children’s medications are often designed to taste good, which may tempt children to take them when unsupervised.
• Kids are curious, and young children especially love to put things in their mouths.

Safe storage
• All medicines must be stored out of children’s sight and reach.
• Do not leave medicines in a purse, in an unlocked cabinet or on a table.
• Keep medicines separate from items such as toothpaste, soap and other things that are used every day.

To sign up for our monthly newsletter, Visit ukhealthcare.uky.edu/safekids.
Did you know that an average of 1.7 million people sustain a brain injury each year? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each year, among children age 14 and younger, traumatic brain injury results in an estimated:

- 2,685 deaths.
- 37,000 hospitalizations.
- 435,000 emergency department visits.

The two leading causes of traumatic brain injuries are falls (35.2 percent) and motor vehicle traffic crashes (17.3 percent).

Most mild brain injuries cause no harm. But sometimes they can cause serious, long-lasting problems. The best way to protect yourself and your family from brain injuries is to prevent them from happening in the first place.

Preventing brain injuries is easy

- Wear a seat belt every time you drive or ride in a motor vehicle, and always buckle up children appropriately according to their height, weight and age.
- Wear a helmet and make sure your children wear helmets when:
  - Riding a bike, motorcycle, snowmobile or all-terrain vehicle.
  - Playing a contact sport such as football, ice hockey or boxing.
  - Using in-line skates or riding a skateboard.
  - Batting and running bases in baseball or softball.
  - Riding a horse.

- Do not take medicine or vitamins in front of kids or involve children as helpers with your medication.
- Tell grandparents and friends about avoiding medication poisoning when your family visits their homes.

Learn the toll-free nationwide poison control center number (800-222-1222), program it into all phones and keep it near every phone.

For additional information and to read the full report, visit www.safekidsfayetecounty.com.

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month

Avoid falls in the home by:
- Installing handrails on stairways.
- Installing window guards to keep young children from falling out of open windows.
- Using safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs when young children are around.
- Removing tripping hazards such as small area rugs and loose electrical cords.
- Make sure the surface on your child’s playground is made of shock-absorbing material, such as hardwood, mulch or sand.

For more information:
Is your child ready for spring sports?

Here is a quick check list to help your child be ready for the field or arena this season.

- Make sure children are prepared for the demands of playing a sport.
- All children should receive a general health exam before enrolling in any sport.
- Provide children with proper aerobic conditioning and skills-building when they are learning a new sport.
- Ensure that children drink an adequate amount of liquids before and during athletic activities. Provide frequent rest periods during hot or humid weather.
- Adult supervision is essential.
- Adults should be present at all times to ensure a safe playing environment and to enforce safety rules.

- Children should be grouped according to skill level, weight and physical maturity.
- Ask about the safety-related policies of your local sports leagues.
- Coaches and other on-field personnel should be trained in first aid and CPR.
- Sport-specific safety equipment check list:
  - Baseball and softball: Batting helmet, shin guards, elbow guards, mouth guard, sunscreen, cleats, hat and detachable “breakaway bases.”
  - Soccer: Shin guards, athletic supporters (males), proper-fitting cleats, sunscreen and water.
  - Track and field: Proper-fitting shoes, sunscreen and water.

Safety tidbit: The importance of pre-participation sports physicals

The pre-participation physical examination (PPE) is a vital step toward safe participation in organized sports. The purpose of the PPE is not to disqualify or exclude an athlete from competition, but rather to help maintain the health and safety of the athlete in training and competition.

The PPE includes past medical history, sport-specific history, family history and a physical exam.

The PPE can help:

- Identify a medical and orthopedic problems that may place the athlete at risk for injury or illness.
- Identify correctable problems that may impair the athlete’s ability to perform.
- Maintain the health and safety of the athlete.
- Assess fitness level for specific sports.
- Educate athletes and parents concerning sports, exercise, injuries and other health-related issues.
- Meet legal and insurance requirements.

For more information, contact Safe Kids at 859-323-1153 or visit www.safekidsfayectecounty.com.

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