

NEWS RELEASE

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webPOISONCONTROL** Cutting-Edge Poison Control App and Online Triage Tool Launched for Poison Prevention Week**

Washington D.C. – National Poison Prevention Week (March 20-26) marks a turning point in poison control. For the past 60 years, poison centers delivered help over the telephone. Now the public can choose how to get help. web**POISONCONTROL**[®], the first online, automated triage tool for poison emergencies will be formally launched during National Poison Prevention Week after a successful year-long pilot. Over 10,000 people have already used the tool to get rapid personalized help for poison emergencies.

web**POISONCONTROL** is a free, easy-to-use online tool that helps people determine the toxicity of unintentionally swallowed products or medications, before symptoms develop. After providing the name of the product, amount swallowed, age and weight, the user is given a specific recommendation: it's safe to stay at home because toxicity is minimal; go immediately to the ER; or call Poison Control (1-800-222-1222) for further guidance. When it's safe to stay home, information is provided on specific symptoms that are likely to occur and not of concern, and symptoms that should trigger a call to Poison Control or an ER visit, should they develop.

Expert guidance at the time of a poison emergency means that the best care is delivered quickly. Without poison control guidance, too many people just guess - resulting in needless ER visits for those who don't need to see a doctor, and dire outcomes for those who stay home when they should have sought medical care. But over the past decade, there's been a change in the way people seek health information – turning to the internet instead of using the phone. “But we noted many inaccuracies in online poison information,” said Toby Litovitz, MD, medical toxicologist and director of the project. “web**POISONCONTROL** was developed to make Poison Control more accessible and respond to the need for a trusted online resource for poison emergencies, especially the need for an app that provided reliable, case-specific recommendations.”

web**POISONCONTROL** could prove to be a game-changer in another way. Despite providing life-saving and cost-saving services and despite a cost savings of \$13.39 per dollar spent on poison control services, most U.S. poison centers have struggled with inadequate funding for decades. Every year U.S. poison centers cost about \$150 million and handle 2.2 million human poison exposures, with 68% of those

cases kept at home without healthcare intervention. “The automation of a computer app could eventually make the delivery of poison control services less expensive, providing some relief from the significant financial challenges that poison centers face,” said Litovitz.

To be ready for emergencies, try it now at www.webpoisoncontrol.org, or download it on your mobile device. At this time, web**POISONCONTROL** helps in cases of possible poisoning from **unintentionally swallowed substances – taken once, by a human (not a pet). It’s for cases where symptoms haven’t developed yet, in people who are healthy, not pregnant, and between the ages of 6 months and 79 years.** For all other cases, call Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222.

Now you can choose the way you access poison help. If you prefer the internet over the phone or can’t make a phone call, try web**POISONCONTROL**. But if you’d rather talk to a real person or don’t meet the criteria for online help, call Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222 for immediate assistance. Just don’t guess. Either use web**POISONCONTROL** or call. Both options are expert, free and confidential.

web**POISONCONTROL** is sponsored by the National Capital Poison Center in Washington, DC, and [seven accredited U.S. poison centers](#) are participating in the project. The content was created by experts – clinical toxicologists with extensive experience in poison control centers. Those experts were able to accomplish the previously unimaginable: making automated poison help quickly and easily accessible online. The simplicity of the app masks the complex logic integrating 1,180 ingredient algorithms, more than 38,000 products, and more than 162,000 barcodes.

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*web**POISONCONTROL** is brought to you by poison control centers. The project was developed and managed by the [National Capital Poison Center](#), and [seven accredited U.S. poison centers](#) are currently participating. Founded in 1980, the National Capital Poison Center is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. web**POISONCONTROL** is funded by charitable contributions, including partial funding provided by the Potomac Health Foundation.*

*To learn more, visit our [Press Box](#). To try it out go to www.webpoisoncontrol.org or download the web**POISONCONTROL** app on the [App Store](#) or on [Google play](#). To contribute, [donate](#) online.*

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