



Poison HOTLINE

Partnership between Iowa Health System and
University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics

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Did you know

One out of every 17 Iowa children under age six is lead-poisoned—more than 4 times the national average. Most childhood lead poisoning is caused by lead-based paint found in houses built before 1960. Young children are particularly at risk of ingesting lead-contaminated house dust, soil, and paint chips.

Lead is especially harmful to a child's developing brain and will affect intelligence, hearing, and growth.

By Iowa state law, children must be tested for lead at least once before starting kindergarten. Blood lead testing is best started when the child is 12 months old.

DEET Insect Repellent

Summer is here and so are the insects! Many bug sprays contain a chemical called DEET (diethyltoluamide). DEET was developed in 1946 by the US Department of Agriculture, and is an effective insect repellent for the control of bugs such as ticks, mosquitoes & other small flying insects. DEET comes in many formulations (e.g. aerosol and non-aerosol sprays, creams, lotions, sticks, foams, and wipes) with concentrations ranging from 4% to 100%. Products containing 6.6% DEET will provide protection for almost 2 hours, while 23.8% DEET will provide an average of 5 hours of protections.

Products containing greater than 30% DEET are typically not needed for most activities that people participate in during the summer. It is recommended that for children between 2 months old and 2 years old, repellents should contain no more than 10% DEET. Children older than 2 years may use higher concentrations of DEET. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that DEET-containing products not be used on children younger than 2 months old.

DEET Toxicity

Toxicity from DEET typically occurs after the excessive use or ingestion of DEET-containing products. After ingesting DEET, symptoms can develop within 30 minutes and children are more sensitive than adults to the effects. Symptoms are mainly neurological and can include agitation, confusion, movement disorders, encephalopathy and seizures. Although rare, deaths have been attributed to the ingestion of, or the chronic dermal application of, DEET.

Management

Because of the risk of seizures, administration of activated charcoal is typically not recommended. Care is symptomatic and supportive. For questions regarding DEET exposures and management, contact the Iowa Statewide Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.

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POISON
Help
1-800-222-1222

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