

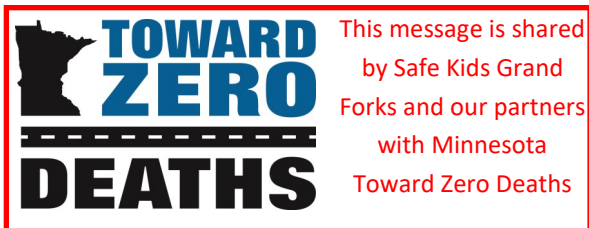


## Medication and Poison Prevention

March is National Poison Prevention Month. Every year more than 59,000 children go to an emergency room for medication poisoning. Almost all of these visits are because the child got into medicine while their parent or caregiver wasn't looking. They also occur from kids giving themselves medication and not knowing how to properly do so. You can keep this from happening to your child/youth by learning how to store, dose and dispose of medicines safely. Here's how:

### Store Medicines Safely

- Put medicines up, away and out of sight and reach. Be sure to consider places where kids get into medicines, like purses, backpacks or nightstands.
- Consider products you might not think about as medicines, such as diaper rash cream, eye drops, patches, etc. and store them safely as well.
- Be alert to visitor's medicine. Remind visitors if they have medications in a bag to put it up and away from children.
- Close your medicine tightly after every use. Buy medicines that come in child resistant packages when you can, but also remember that child resistant does not mean child proof.



### Give Medications Safely

- Use the dosing device that comes with the medicine.
- Check the active ingredients listed on the label as many meds have the same active ingredients with different brand names.
- Communicate with caregivers or your parenting partner and make sure children do not get a double dose of medication.
- Teach teens or others that are self medicating how to read labels and take medications safely. Don't assume they know how to do this.

### Get Rid of Medications Safely

- Clean out your medicine cabinet. Get rid of any expired or unused medication that kids/youth could get into. Many communities have take back programs at local law enforcement agencies/pharmacies. Visit our website to find a take back location near you. <https://www.safekidsgf.com/PoisoningandMedication.html>
- You can also dispose of it yourself at home if needed. Put medicine into a sealable plastic bag with water. Add kitty litter or coffee grounds to make it less appealing and then toss in the trash.

## Winter Coats and Car Seats

Bulky winter coats and snow pants should not be worn in a car seat as it makes the harness straps too loose to be effective in a crash. Here are some tips to keep your child safe during the colder winter months.

- ◆ Have the child wear a light weight fleece and once the child is strapped in then put the heavier winter coat on backwards.
- ◆ Use a blanket to wraps around the child once they are strapped in.
- ◆ Make sure to warm the car up ahead of time if possible.
- ◆ Unzip the coat and then buckle the child.

**Remember to "Strap Before You Wrap"! Then, as spring comes and the winter coats come off, make sure to tighten up the harnesses so the webbing can't be pinched.**



Altru Health System is proud to serve as the lead agency for Safe Kids Grand Forks.

For more information on this and other childhood injury prevention topics, visit [safekidsgf.com](http://safekidsgf.com), call us at 701.780.1489 or email [safekids@altru.org](mailto:safekids@altru.org).