

# Things that can Poison



“The doorbell rang just as I had literally 5 minutes to get the washing in before the school run! I dropped the clothes, rushed to answer the door. As I came back in I was horrified to see my daughter about to bite into the squishy purple washing tab I’d left on the side by mistake. Couldn’t believe I’d forgotten I’d left it there!”

Here are our top tips for keeping children safe from poisoning:

## Laundry and cleaning products

– Liquitabs make laundry easy. But the bright colours and squeezable texture make them attractive to babies and small children. And **the concentrated detergent is harmful if swallowed**. Brightly coloured cleaning products can also be attractive to small children.

- Keep laundry and cleaning products out of reach and sight of young children
- Safety caps and lids slow children down but don’t rely on them – it takes just seconds for some three or four year olds to open them
- Look out for products with bittering agents such as Bitrex® when you’re shopping. They help prevent children swallowing products by making them taste really nasty.

## Painkillers – everyday painkillers and other medicines are **the most common way for young children to be poisoned**.

- Keep all medicines out of reach and sight of young children, ideally in a high up lockable cabinet
- Watch out for painkillers left on the bedside table or in the handbag slung on the floor.

## E-cigarettes and air fresheners

– e-cigarette refills can contain high levels of nicotine which **can make children ill if swallowed**. Young children can mistake an air freshener bottle with reed diffusers for a drink with a straw.

- Keep these products well out of reach of young children.

## Carbon monoxide – you can’t see it, smell it or taste it but if carbon monoxide creeps out from flame-burning appliances it can kill children in seconds.

- Fit a carbon monoxide alarm in every room where you have a gas appliance or fire.
- Get your gas appliances serviced regularly.

## Find out more and share

Follow us on Facebook and share with friends and family:

[www.facebook.com/ChildAccidentPreventionTrust](https://www.facebook.com/ChildAccidentPreventionTrust)

Visit the safety advice section of the Child Accident Prevention Trust website:

[www.capt.org.uk](http://www.capt.org.uk)

# Poisoning



## Activity ideas

- Have a section on your table with the following, and use these to talk to parents about the risk of accidental poisoning and storing products safely:
  - An empty liquid box
  - Empty cleaning product bottles
  - A jar of sweets that look similar to medications
  - An empty blister strip pack of painkillers (often found in handbags).
  - E-cigarettes and refills
- Get your free Bitrex® Taste Test to teach parents about household poisons in a way they won't forget. Visit the Child Safety Week website for details [www.capt.org.uk/csw-bitrex-taste-test](http://www.capt.org.uk/csw-bitrex-taste-test)
- Get parents down on their hands and knees in the bathroom or kitchen at home and they will start to see the world through their child's eyes and spot potential hazards.
- Get a discussion going using CAPT's **Toxic Tales** DVD resource pack. With three films showing common poisoning scenarios, support cards for you and flyers for parents to take home, it helps capture parents' imaginations so that safety messages stick.
- Gather together a variety of tablets and similar looking sweets, cleaning products and juice bottles, line them up and ask parents to spot the difference. If you're working with children too, use a photograph instead to avoid any temptation!
- Use our kitchen poisons activity resource to show parents and carers just how similar cleaning products lurking under the sink can look to children's playthings.

Some 3-4 year olds can open child safety caps in seconds!

## CAPT resources for your event

- Toxic Tales DVD resource pack
- What might poison your child? leaflet
- How safe am I from poisoning? flyer
- How safe am I from poisonous gas? flyer
- How safe am I in the garden? leaflet
- Preventing accidents session plans – contains dedicated session plans on:
  - Poisoning from cleaning things
  - Swallowing medicines
- One Step Ahead wall chart

Available from CAPT's online shop

[www.capt.org.uk/shop](http://www.capt.org.uk/shop)

## Useful links

Visit the CAPT website [www.childsafetyweek.org.uk](http://www.childsafetyweek.org.uk) to download the kitchen poisons activity resources.

The Keep Caps from Kids campaign has a fun video to remind parents why they need to keep liquid boxes out of reach: [www.keepcapsfromkids.eu/uk](http://www.keepcapsfromkids.eu/uk)