Poisonings in South Carolina
Hospitalizations and Emergency Department Visits in 2014

Top sources of self-inflicted poisonings were due to:
- Tranquilizers
- Analgesics
- Other drugs

Top sources of accidental poisonings were due to:
- Opioids
- Second hand smoke

9 of the top 10 sources of poisonings were drug-related!

Hosp. & ED visits have increased over the past 10 years:
- Hospitalizations: 4,746
- ED Visits: 8,797
- Total Hosp. & ED: 13,543

Hospital and emergency department (ED) charges:
- Hospitalizations: $151,754,400
- ED Visits: $32,978,400
- Total Hosp. & ED: $184,732,800

Highest risk for poisonings:
- Ages 45-49
- Ages 15-18
- Ages 1-4

Highest poisonings by race & gender:
- Other males
- White females
- Other females

Opioid overdoses have more than tripled over the past 10 years:
- 212% increase
Poisoning Prevention
Poison Help Line: 800.222.1222
http://poison.sc.edu

Drugs and Medicines
• Only take prescription medications that are prescribed to you by a healthcare professional and never share your prescription medications.
• Never take a larger or more frequent dose of your medications to try to get faster or more powerful effects.
• Keep all prescription medicines, especially prescription painkillers, over the counter medicines, vitamins and herbals in a safe place out of the reach of small children or individuals that may misuse them.
• Follow all directions on medication labels and read all warning labels. Some drugs cannot be taken safely with other medications or alcohol.
• Keep medicines in their original bottles or containers.
• Monitor the use of medicines prescribed for children and teenagers, such as medicines for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).
• Dispose of unused, unneeded, or expired prescription drugs. Two options include drug take back programs or disposing of medications by grinding the medication with kitty litter or coffee grounds, double bagging, and then dispose in regular household trash.

Be Smart About Storage
• Store all medicines and household products up high and out of the reach of small children.
• Secure the child safety cap completely every time you use a medication, however, the cap is not a substitute for supervision.
• When handling medications or using household products, put them away immediately after use.

What To Do If A Poisoning Occurs
• Remain calm.
• Call 911 if the victim has collapsed or is not breathing. If the victim is awake and alert, dial 1-800-222-1222 and have the following information ready:
  o The victim’s age and weight
  o The container or bottle of the poison if available
  o The time of the poison exposure
  o The address where the poisoning occurred
• Stay on the phone and follow the instructions from the emergency operator or poison control center.

Sources:
SC Department of Health and Environmental Control, 2016.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Poisoning/preventiontips.htm