CHAPTER 17

Poisoning

Video - Poisoning
Lesson Objectives

1. Explain different ways poisons can enter the body.
2. List things you can do in your own home to prevent poisoning of both children and adults.
3. Describe the role of Poison Control Centers in the treatment of poisoning.
4. Describe the first aid for swallowed and inhaled poisons.
5. List actions to take when exposed to poison ivy, oak or sumac.
Poisoning

- Almost 2 million poisoning incidents every year in United States resulting in about 38,800 deaths.
- Most are accidental, some are intentional (suicide or drug use).
- Virtually all accidental poisonings can be prevented.
Overview of Poisoning

• Poison is any substance that enters or touches the body with effects that are injurious to health or life threatening.

• Most occur in home with common products.

• Assume all substances are poisonous unless known otherwise.
Overview of Poisoning continued

- Can enter body by being:
  - Swallowed
  - Injected
  - Inhaled
  - Absorbed

- Almost anything can be poisonous in doses larger than intended.
Poison Control Centers

- Provide information and treatment advice for all kinds of poisonings.
- Call (800) 222-1222 anytime.
- If necessary, call 9-1-1 and ask for PCC.
- Will have most accurate information.
- Will advise on first aid.
- Can advise on prevention.
Preventing Poisoning in Children: Household and Chemical Products

- Use safety locks on cabinets.
- Store potential poisons out of reach and out of sight.
- Store products in original containers.
- Teach children about poison.
- Store food and products in different areas.
- Put back after use.
- Keep away from areas sprayed with pesticide.
- Discard old or outdated products.
Preventing Poisoning in Children: Medicine

- Keep out of sight, locked up and out of reach.
- Use child-resistant containers.
- Store in original containers.
- Keep purses/diaper bags out of reach.
- Do not take medication in front of children.
- Do not call medicine candy.
- Keep vitamins locked up and out of reach.
- Be aware of medicines visitors may bring.
Preventing Poisoning in Children: Plants

- Contact PCC about toxic plants in area.
- Know plants in your home and yard.
- Keep poisonous plants out of reach of children and pets.
- Teach children not to eat mushrooms, leaves or berries in yard.
- Keep children and pets away from plants that have been recently treated with chemicals.
Preventing Poisoning in Adults

- Keep in original containers.
- Store food and products separately.
- Read directions and caution labels.
- Never mix products together.
- Turn on fans, open windows when using household products.
- When spraying turn nozzle away and wear protective clothing.
- Stay away from areas sprayed with pesticides.
- Never sniff containers.
- Discard old products.
Swallowed Poisons

- Most cases of poisoning involve swallowed substances.
- Effects may be immediate or delayed.
- Give first aid as soon as possible.
- Victim may be unresponsive or confused and disoriented.
- Most important thing is recognizing the poisoning and then acting.
Assess the Situation

• Look for containers nearby or clue of substance or product use.
• Ask others at scene what happened.
• Try to find out how much the person may have swallowed and how long ago.
Signs and Symptoms of Swallowed Poisons

- May look and feel ill
- Abdominal pain
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- Altered mental status, unresponsive
- Burns, stains or odors around mouth
- Dilated or constricted pupils
- Abnormal breathing
Care for Swallowed Poisons

- **Unresponsive victim** – call 9-1-1.
- Check for normal breathing, provide CPR if needed.
- Put breathing, unresponsive victim in recovery position.
- Call PCC for responsive victim and follow their instructions.
First Aid: Swallowed Poisons

1. Determine what was swallowed, when and how much.

2. For responsive victim – call PCC and follow their instructions.

3. For unresponsive victim or any victim with life-threatening condition – call 9-1-1 and give BLS if needed.
Chapter 17 • Poisoning

Food Poisoning

- Occurs when food contaminated
- 48 million people become sick every year, and about 3,000 die.
- Contamination can occur at any stage of food preparation or delivery.
- Symptoms may begin soon after eating or within 24 hours.
- Talk with health care provider unless urgent.
When to Seek Urgent Medical Care for Food Poisoning

- Signs of shock
- Shaking or chills
- Chest pain
- Signs of severe dehydration
- Confusion or difficulty reasoning
Preventing Food Poisoning

- Refrigerate foods promptly.
- Cook and reheat food to appropriate temperature.
- Maintain hot cooked food at correct temperature.
- Prevent cross-contamination.
- Handle food properly.
- Keep cold food cold and hot food hot.
- Refrigerate or freeze within two hours.
Defrost food in refrigerator, cold running water or microwave.

Never marinate food at room-temperature.

Divide leftovers into small containers for quick cooling in refrigerator.

Remove poultry stuffing immediately before refrigerating.

Do not overfill refrigerator.
First Aid: Food Poisoning

1. Have victim rest.
2. Give victim lots of clear fluid.
3. Seek medical attention.
Inhaled Poisons

- Gases and fumes may be in home or workplace.
- Poisoning can result if insufficient fresh air.
- Check product labels.
Inhaled Poisons continued

- Includes gases that may escape from pipelines or transport tanks
- Smokes and fumes from fires are poisonous.
- If you smell gas, stay away.
- Call 9-1-1.
Carbon Monoxide

- Causes highest number of fatal unintentional poisonings
- Invisible, odorless and tasteless
- May be present from exhaust, faulty furnace, kerosene heater, industrial equipment, fireplace, wood stove, fire
- Exposure to large amounts can be lethal.
- Exposure to small amounts may cause gradual poisoning.
Preventing Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

• Have gas, oil or coal burning appliances serviced every year.

• Install carbon monoxide detector in home:
  • If it sounds evacuate and call 9-1-1.

• Seek medical attention if you suspect CO poisoning and feel dizzy, lightheaded or nauseated.
Preventing Carbon Monoxide Poisoning continued

- Do not use gas or charcoal burning device inside home.
- Do not run vehicle inside attached garage.
- Do not burn anything in stove or fireplace that isn’t vented.
- Do not heat house with gas oven.
First Aid: Carbon Monoxide and Inhaled Poisons

1. Immediately move victim to fresh air.
2. Call 9-1-1.
3. Monitor victim and be ready to give CPR, if needed.

Additional Care:
- Put an unresponsive victim in the recovery position.
Poison Ivy, Oak, Sumac

- Contact with resin causes allergic contact dermatitis in about half of population.
- If you have made contact, wash area with soap and water.
- Rash appears within few hours up to 2 days.
Poison Ivy, Oak, Sumac \textit{continued}

- Keep from scratching rash:
  - Skin can break and become infected.
- Rash cannot spread to other people.
- First aid is controlling itching.
First Aid: Poison Ivy, Oak and Sumac

1. Wash area with soap and water as soon as possible after contact.
2. Seek medical attention if severe reaction or swelling on face or genitals.
3. Treat itching.
CHAPTER 17
Learning Checkpoint
Chapter – Opening Scenario

With your young son, Danny, you are visiting a friend at her home. Danny has been playing with a toy truck on the floor, which he now pushes down the hallway into the bathroom. You start to get up to bring him back but your friend says, “That’s OK, there’s nothing in there he can get into.”

With the normal curiosity of a child, however, Danny starts looking in the bathroom drawers and soon finds a bottle of what looks to him like little candy mints. He puts a handful in his mouth – they don’t taste much like mint but he chews and swallows them anyway. You see pills spilled on the floor when you walk into the bathroom. He admits he ate “some” of the pills.

What do you do?
Scenario 1

A handyman is working in your garage, stripping old paint using an industrial solvent. When you go to check on his work, you find him leaning against the wall, saying he just feels a bit dizzy. There are strong fumes from the solvent in the garage.

What do you do?
Scenario 2

In the morning, you helped clear away some brush and weeds on a neighbor’s property. Now you have developed a red rash on your forearms that is very itchy.

What should you do?
CHAPTER 17

Discussion and Questions