

# How to dodge summertime threats

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(HealthDay)—During the summer, poison centers get an increase in the number of calls about bites, stings, plants and pesticides.

The Nebraska Regional Poison Center offers these tips on how to avoid poisonings—and other hazards—this summer.

"If you are stung, call the poison [center](#). Close observation for allergic reaction is important, especially in the first hour after a sting," the center said in a news release.

Use only [insect repellents](#) that are meant to be used on skin. Products containing DEET should be applied sparingly to exposed skin and clothing—and repellents with less than 10 percent DEET are as effective as stronger ones. Wash thoroughly once you go indoors.

A seasonal threat to kids is exposure to gasoline, kerosene, lighter fluids and torch fuels. These products are among the top 10 causes of childhood poisoning deaths in the United States, according to the poison center. Always store these items out of children's reach.

Food poisoning is another summertime threat. When cooking out or picnicking, keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Foodsafety.gov has a helpful temperature checklist. Always use a food thermometer to determine if meat is fully cooked, the center advised.

Fireworks also pose a poisoning threat because they contain toxic chemicals. Glow sticks are a common reason for calls to poison centers, but usually cause only minor irritation. If eye exposure occurs, poison center nurses can offer instructions.

Program 800-222-1222 into your phone, and you will be able to reach a poison center anywhere in the United States.

**More information:** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers more [poisoning prevention tips](#).

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