



American Association of Poison Control Centers

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
March 19, 2013

For More Information, Contact:
Loreeta Canton, director of public relations and
member services; canton@aapcc.org;
703-894-1863; or 701.391.0626

Poison Centers: Protecting Health While Saving Americans Time and Money *American Association of Poison Control Centers Observes Annual National Poison Prevention Week*

ALEXANDRIA, VA. – America’s 57 local poison centers save lives 24 hours a day, seven days a week by providing free, confidential medical advice to people in poison emergencies, according to Marsha Ford, MD, FACMT, FACEP, president of the American Association of Poison Control Centers.

Since 1962, the third week in March has been designated National Poison Prevention Week and has focused national attention on the dangers of poisonings and how to prevent them. America’s 57 poison centers are committed to safeguarding the health and well-being of every American through poison prevention and free, confidential, expert medical services.

“National Poison Prevention Week is a great time to acknowledge the important, life-saving work done every day by the experts at America’s poison centers,” Ford said. “People who call their local poison center can be assured that the health care professionals who answer their calls have received the highest training possible. Despite the critical services provided, however, poison centers are in jeopardy after suffering federal funding cuts of 36 percent in 2011 and additional cuts at the state and local levels.”

In 2011, U.S. poison centers fielded more than 3.6 million calls, including about 2.3 million cases of human exposures to poisons. Poison centers save lives by providing free and confidential health-care services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year in more than 150 languages. Highly trained, expert health-care professionals at poison centers across the country provide immediate advice to people who call with poisoning emergencies. Poison centers also save money. About 90 percent of the people who call with poison emergencies are treated at home following the advice of poison center experts – saving an estimated \$1.19 billion in health-care costs each year.

“America’s system of poison centers is one of the most successful and cost-effective public health programs in the nation,” said AAPCC Executive Director Debbie Carr, MEd. “As our representatives in Washington, D.C., and in state legislatures across the country make decisions about funding for poison centers, it’s important they carefully consider the impact of those decisions on the health and finances

– more –

of the American people. The millions of Americans who rely on poison centers each year illustrate the importance of the poison center system that safeguards the health of our friends, neighbors and family members.”

For more information, contact Loreeta Canton, director of public relations and member services for the American Association of Poison Control Centers, at 703.894.1858 or canton@aapcc.org or visit www.aapcc.org.

About the American Association of Poison Control Centers:

The AAPCC supports the nation’s 57 poison centers in their efforts to treat and prevent drug, consumer product, animal, environmental and food poisoning. Members staff the Poison Help hotline at 1-800-222-1222 that provides free, confidential, expert medical advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year from toxicology specialists, including nurses, pharmacists, physicians and poison information providers. In addition, the AAPCC maintains the only poison information and surveillance database in the United States, providing real-time monitoring of unusual poisoning patterns, chemical exposures and other emerging public health hazards. The AAPCC partners with federal agencies such as EPA, HRSA and the CDC, as well as private industry.

To learn more, visit www.aapcc.org, like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, or read our blog at aapcc.wordpress.com. To join your voice with other poison center supporters, register for the AAPCC advocacy network at www.capwiz.com/aapcc – click on “Action E-List.”

– 30 –