



NEW WARNING ON LAUNDRY DETERGENT PACKETS

Poison centers across the country have seen an increase in calls about pediatric exposure to single-use laundry detergent packets. These colorful little packets of laundry detergent are convenient, but they are very attractive and pose a real risk to small children. Some young children who swallow or bite into these small packets have become very ill and have required hospitalization. Other children have gotten the product in their eyes, resulting in significant eye irritation.

A new study in the journal *Pediatrics*, examined national poison center data from 2012-2013 and found that 17,230 young children were exposed to these packets. Almost 800 of these children were hospitalized.

The Nebraska Regional Poison Center reports a 14% increase in calls pertaining to laundry detergent packets in 2014 over the previous year. So far in 2014, 59 of the 91 children in Nebraska exposed to single-use laundry detergent packets required treatment in an emergency department; 12 of those children were hospitalized.

**Parents need to be aware of the dangers of single-use laundry detergent packets.
The Nebraska Regional Poison Center recommends the following safety tips:**

- Always keep detergents locked up and out of reach of children.
- Follow the specific disposal instructions on the label.
- Do not cut the single-use laundry detergents packets. They are designed to dissolve completely in the machine, even in cold water.
- Handle this product with dry hands only, and remember to close the product container completely after each use to keep out moisture. The film that encases the laundry detergent is designed to dissolve quickly, even in small amounts of water. Store the product away from water.
- Like all other cleaning products, keep single-use laundry detergents out of the reach of children and pets between every load to prevent unintended exposure.
- Always ensure that the re-closable bag or container is tightly sealed and locked during storage.
- As with other laundry products, keep the product in its original container with intact labels and store away from food.

If you think a child has been exposed to any laundry detergent, call the poison center at 1-800-222-1222 immediately. The Registered Nurses at the Poison Center are available 24/7 to answer your calls and questions.