



COLLEGE OF
PHARMACY
NEW MEXICO POISON &
DRUG INFORMATION CENTER

ABOUT YOUR POISON CENTER

1. Who answers the phones?

The New Mexico Poison & Drug Information Center (NMPDIC) has 12 pharmacist Specialists in Poison Information (11 certified) and 1 pharmacy technician.

2. Who does the poison center serve?

Any person in New Mexico may call the poison center. We have the capability to provide service in over 80 languages.

3. What does the poison center do?

The poison center helps triage patients (determine if hospital visit is needed) with an exposure to any substance that may be toxic. This includes medications, chemicals, plants, mushrooms, venomous animals (snakes, scorpions), food poisoning, and others. We keep more than 80% of those who call us at home, saving the state healthcare dollars and resources. We kept 83% at home in FY22, for an estimated cost savings of \$12 million.

4. When do people call the poison center?

The poison center is open and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The peak call volume is from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM, with 26% of calls during that time frame.

5. How many calls does the poison center take?

We took **26,585 calls** in FY22.

6. What types of calls does the poison center get?

In FY22, 84% were human exposures, 4% animal exposures, 7.3% drug information, 4.7% other information.

7. What substances are involved in poisoning?

The most frequent substances in FY22 were analgesics (pain relievers), household cleaners, cosmetics, antidepressants, antihistamines, alcohols, cardiovascular drugs, sedatives, and gases (such as generated when mixing bleach with cleaners). There were 241 exposures to cannabis (131 edible) compared to 196 exposures in FY21 (97 edible).

8. What ages are involved in poisoning exposures?

The majority of exposures occur in adults (57.75%) as compared to children (42.25%). The highest exposure rate in children is 1-2 years of age and for adults 20-39 years of age.

9. Who calls the poison center?

In FY22, 36% of calls were from a healthcare provider, 24.7% were from a parent, 22% were from the patient themselves, 3% were from other relatives, 2.2% were from a spouse, 1.7% were from a grandparent, and 0.4% were from someone else in the home.

10. Where did the calls come from?

In FY22, we received calls from 32 of the 33 counties in New Mexico. The counties with the highest number of human exposures per 100,000 residents were Bernalillo, Socorro, San Juan, McKinley, and Curry, all with more than 11 exposures per 100,000.

11. Why do people call the poison center?

The most common reason for a call is an accidental exposure (33.8%). The next most common reason is therapeutic error (double dose or accidental misuse of medication) (21%). Other reasons include misuse of a household product (11.7%), adverse drug reaction (5.5%), environmental exposure (carbon monoxide, natural gas) (5.6%), suicide (4.5%), workplace exposure (3%), bites/stings (2.2%), food poisoning (2.3%), and substance abuse (1.9%).

12. How is the poison center funded?

Although the Poison Center has served New Mexico for over 40 years, it only recently became an official agency in New Mexico through legislative action in 2013 (Senate Bill 140). Nearly 94% of its funding comes from the state of New Mexico (\$2 million in FY22). A small portion comes from a federal allocation that benefits all poison centers (6%). The poison center provides its services free of charge to any callers.

13. How does the poison center help to prevent poisonings?

The poison center's Health Education Consultant utilizes various platforms, such as social media, health fairs, and virtual and live presentations, to provide poison prevention education to the public across the state. Last year's educational efforts focused on securing naloxone and fentanyl testing strips for distribution; presenting a research project on Determining How Effective Radio Public Service Announcements Are At Driving Call Volumes Withing The Navajo Nation; and hosting a live social media question and answer session on cannabis safety and storage that received participants across the nation.

