

# TOXALERT

## 2001 Statistical Report

Special Issue

December 2002

**New  
Emergency Number  
800-222-1222**

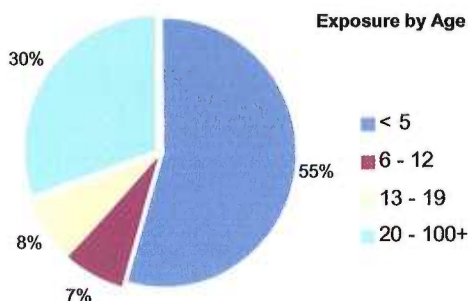
A Newsletter of the  
**MARYLAND  
POISON CENTER**

Saving Lives;  
saving dollars is  
one of the simple  
ways of stating  
some of what the  
Maryland Poison  
Center does.

This report  
provides an  
overview of the  
experience of the  
Maryland Poison  
Center during  
2001.

The Maryland Poison Center (MPC) is a division of the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy and is certified by the American Association of Poison Control Centers as a regional poison center for Maryland. In addition, the MPC serves as a consultation center for the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems. This report presents an overview of MPC poisoning data for 2001. In 2001, the MPC received 57,130 calls. While 35,283 of these calls involved a human exposure, the remaining 21,847 were requests for information or animal poisonings.

The majority of poison exposures involve children under the age of six as shown in the chart below.



### GENDER

Examination of the calls for gender shows **49%** male, **51%** female.

### Animal Exposures

Although the majority of calls to the MPC involve people, many calls involve animals. In 2001, a total of 2,077 animal exposures were reported.

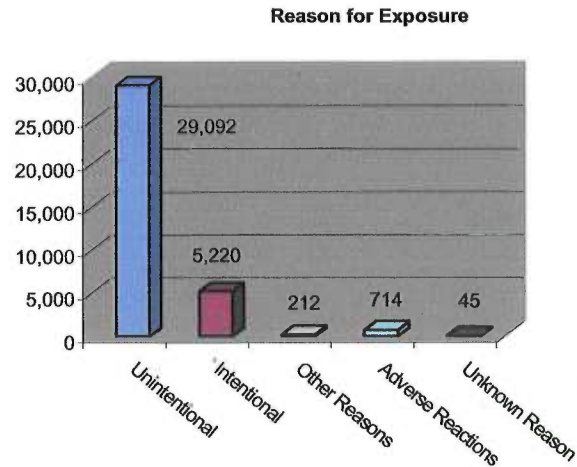
County	Human Exposures	%
Allegany	467	1.32
Anne Arundel	4,593	13.02
Baltimore	3,523	9.98
Baltimore (City)	8,353	23.67
Calvert	680	1.93
Caroline	190	0.54
Carroll	1,350	3.83
Cecil	825	2.34
Charles	761	2.16
Dorchester	253	0.72
Frederick	1,481	4.20
Garrett	231	0.65
Harford	2,083	5.90
Howard	1,779	5.04
Kent	181	0.51
Montgomery	2,274	6.45
Prince George's	1,961	5.56
Queen Anne's	336	0.95
Saint Mary's	772	2.19
Somerset	108	0.31
Talbot	336	0.95
Washington	951	2.70
Wicomico	644	1.82
Worcester	382	1.08
Other/Unknown	769	2.18
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,283</b>	<b>100.00</b>

For additional information, send an email to [banderso@rx.umaryland.edu](mailto:banderso@rx.umaryland.edu) or visit our website at [www.pharmacy.umaryland.edu/~mpc/](http://www.pharmacy.umaryland.edu/~mpc/).

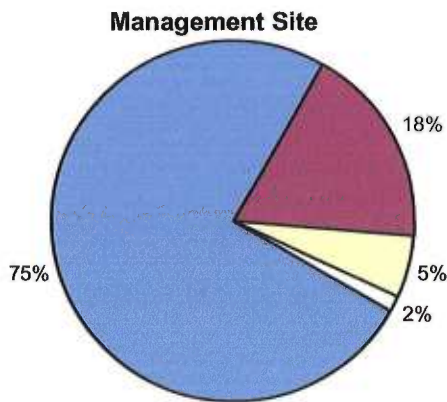
**Circumstance**

Acute exposures accounted for 95% of the total calls, acute-on-chronic were 4% and chronic exposures accounted for 1% of calls.

The people who call the MPC have several different reasons for their exposures. The graph to the right shows **Unintentional** exposures, which could be occupational, environmental, bite/sting, or others; **Intentional** exposures, which could be due to misuse or abuse; **Adverse Reactions** to food or drugs; **Other** which includes malicious or contaminant/tampering; and **Unknown**.



**MPC Safely Manages Patients at Home**



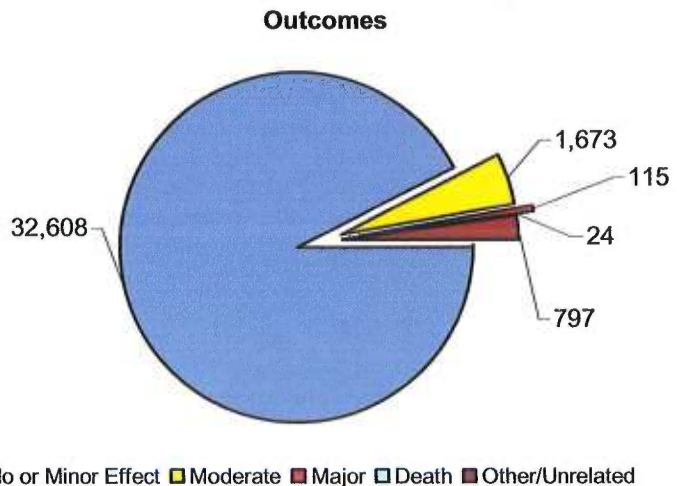
■ Managed On Site ■ In/en route to HCF □ Referred to HCF by MPC □ Other

In 2001, 75% of all poisoning cases were safely managed at home (on site). The graph to the left describes where the cases were managed. Safely managing patients at home saves millions of dollars in unnecessary health care costs. It also allows more efficient and effective use of limited health care resources. By calling the Maryland Poison Center, we can help save lives and save dollars.

**Outcomes**

The true measure of the effectiveness of the MPC program is in patient outcomes. Over 92% of all cases reported to the MPC resulted in either no effect or only minor effects. As shown in the graphic to the right, few cases had poor outcomes. There were 24 poisoning cases reported to the Maryland Poison Center that resulted in death (0.07%).

Our mission is to decrease the cost and complexity of care while maintaining and or improving patient outcomes. This data clearly shows that we're meeting our mission.



■ No or Minor Effect ■ Moderate ■ Major □ Death ■ Other/Unrelated

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## Substances Involved in Poisonings

### Drug Substances

Analgesics	4,219
Anticonvulsants	733
Antidepressants	1,881
Antihistamines	1,146
Antimicrobials	934
Asthma therapies	314
Cardiovascular drugs	1,007
Cough & cold preparations	1,535
Electrolytes/minerals	283
Eye, ear, nose, throat	231
Gastrointestinal	803
Hormone	763
Muscle relaxants	301
Sedatives	2,087
Stimulants/street drugs	731
Topicals	1,812
Vitamins	881
Miscellaneous	965
<b>Total Drug Substances</b>	<b>20,626</b>

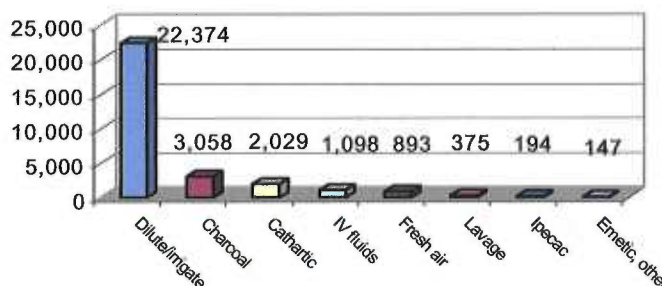
### Non-Drug Substances

Adhesives	258
Alcohols	1,287
Arts & Crafts	1,015
Automotive	213
Bites & Stings	719
Chemicals	676
Cleaning	3,155
Cosmetics/Personal Care	3,977
Deodorizers	311
Fertilizers	134
Food	546
Foreign bodies	1,930
Fumes/gases	419
Hydrocarbons	715
Insecticides	776
Paint	412
Plants	1,514
Polishes	113
Rodenticides	254
Miscellaneous	1,474
<b>Total non-drug substances</b>	<b>19,898</b>

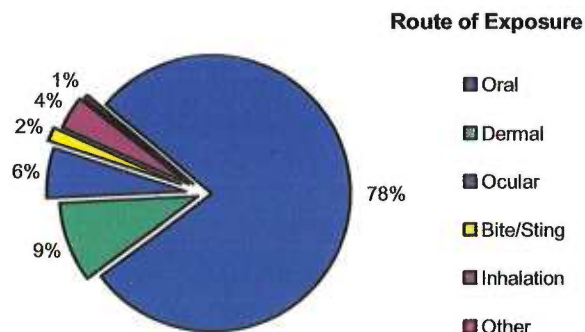
The tables on the left list the substances that were most frequently responsible for poisonings in Maryland during 2001. Please note that there are more substances documented here than there are poisoning patients reported. That's because patients can be exposed to more than one substance in a poisoning event.

The table at right describes the decontamination performed for poisoning victims. Most patients were managed conservatively with dilution/irrigation. Dilution is generally done for ingested toxins; irrigation is performed for topical exposures (example: splash exposures to the eye).

### Decontamination



### Route of Exposure



By far the most common way that poisoning patients in Maryland get exposed to toxins is from ingestion. This includes cases of children putting toxic substances in their mouths, patients mistakenly ingesting someone else's medicines, people accidentally brushing their teeth with a product intended for topical use, etc. Eye exposures were the next most common route of exposure.

For all exposures, prompt attention is the best way to reduce the likelihood of developing severe toxicity. Whenever you have a poisoning question, call the experts at the Maryland Poison Center.

**MARYLAND POISON CENTER**

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Pre-sorted Standard  
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New  
Emergency Number  
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**TOXALERT** Year 2001

Visit our website at  
[www.pharmacy.umaryland.edu/~mpc/](http://www.pharmacy.umaryland.edu/~mpc/)

**Acknowledgements**

The following organizations deserve special thanks for the continued support of the Maryland Poison Center:

- University of Maryland School of Pharmacy
- MD Department of Health & Mental Hygiene
- US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration
- AstraZeneca
- Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS)

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