



AAPCC Position Statement on Single-Load Liquid Laundry Packets

The American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC) supports rigorous safety efforts pertaining to single-load liquid laundry packets (Laundry Packets), e.g., through packaging, labeling, product design, information dissemination, storing, handling and usage education, or otherwise.

In 2012, AAPCC and the toxicology experts at the nation's fifty-five poison centers highlighted the dangers of Laundry Packets, especially to children five years-old and younger. In 2012, Poison Centers received over 6,000 Laundry Packet exposure calls related to children five and under. That number rose to over 10,000 in 2013 and close to 12,000 in 2014.

Poison centers receive many calls each year pertaining to children exposed to traditional laundry detergent, which often causes a mild upset stomach. Exposures to Laundry Packets, which are encased in a water-soluble membrane that can burst open, are typically highly concentrated compared to traditional laundry detergent and thus can have significantly more serious effects. A recent study (*Pediatrics*, Nov. 2014) of exposures using 2012-2013 data from the National Poison Data System, highlighted that during those two years, children younger than 3 years old accounted for 73.5% of exposures, over one hundred patients required tracheal intubation, and there was one confirmed death; other serious clinical effects included coma, seizures, pulmonary edema, respiratory arrest, corneal abrasion, and ocular burns.

In combination with appropriate safety packaging, labeling, and product design, AAPCC supports increased information dissemination and education efforts as pertain to Laundry Packets. For example, parents and caregivers should be continually instructed to keep Laundry Packets locked up high and out of reach of children, to follow the instructions on the product labels, and to call 1-800-222-1222 immediately if a child swallows detergent or has been otherwise exposed, e.g., ocular or dermal.