



The Children's Trust

Oct 2007

Unintentional Poisonings to Children Aged 0-6 Years Miami-Dade County, 2006

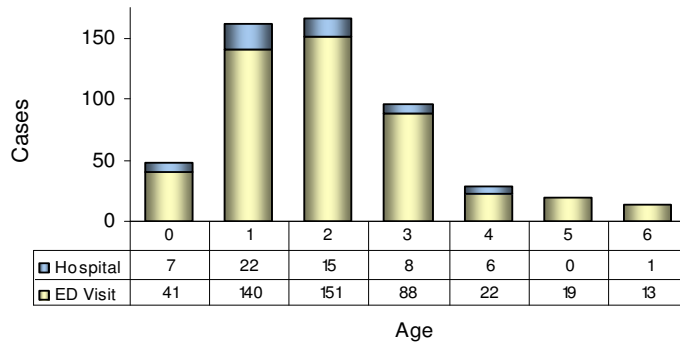
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY INJURY FACTS



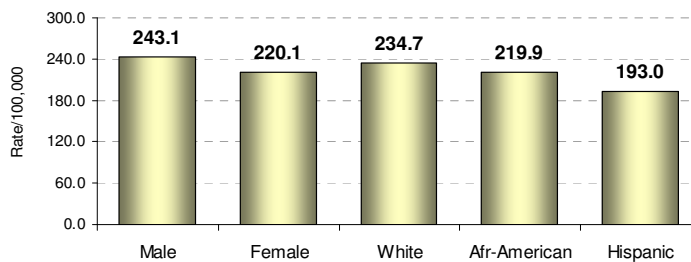
Children under the age of six are at the greatest risk for unintentional poisoning. They are curious by nature and their desire to put everything in their mouths increases their poisoning risk. Substances most associated with child poisoning include household and personal care products, medicines, plants and lead. Nationally the death rate from childhood unintentional poisoning has declined over the past decade, largely due to child resistant packaging, heightened parental awareness and interventions by poison control centers. There have been no deaths from unintentional poison to Miami-Dade children aged 0-6 years since 2000.

Medically-Treated Unintentional Poisonings

**Nonfatal Unintentional Poisonings
2006 Hospitalizations and Emerg. Dept. Visits**



**Nonfatal Unintentional Poisonings
2006 Hospitalizations and Emerg. Dept. Visits**



- 73% of nonfatal medically-treated poisonings were caused by drugs or medicinals, most often prescription medicines found within the home.
- 27% of nonfatal medically-treated poisonings were caused by other solid, liquid or gas substances. Caustic substances, cleaning agents and pest control chemicals were most often associated with these cases.

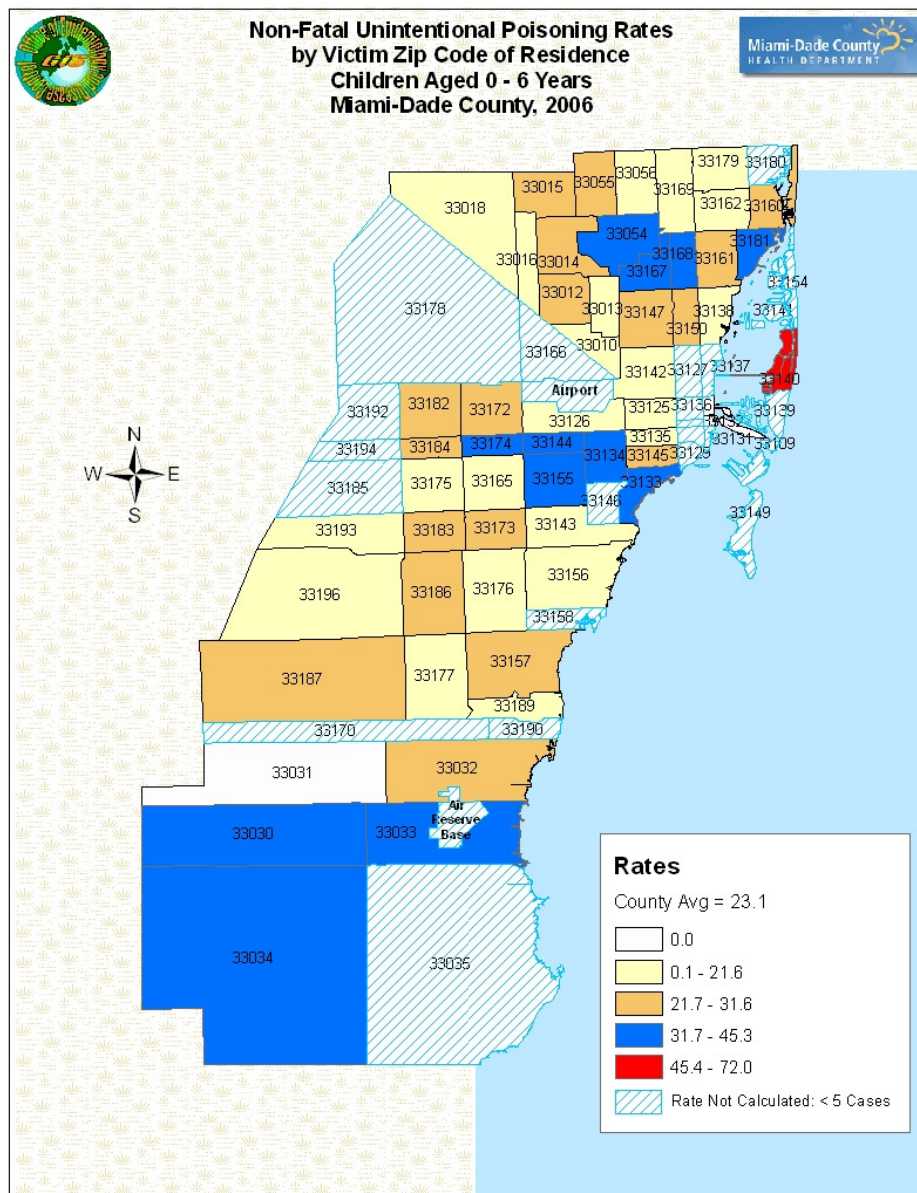
- There were 473 emergency department (ED) visits and 59 hospitalizations due to unintentional poisoning to children aged 0-6 years during 2006. No poisoning deaths occurred during 2006 to this age group.
- 39% of the medically-treated poisonings involved children less than 2 years old and 71% involved children less than 3 years old. Males (54% of cases) were slightly more affected than females.
- The nonfatal unintentional poisoning rate was similar for males and females and lowest for Hispanic children.

Drugs and Medicinals	386	73%
Analgesics, Antirheumatics	77	14%
Tranquilizers	28	5%
Respiratory Drugs	28	5%
Cardiovascular Drugs	28	5%
Benzodiazepines	27	5%
All Other Drugs	179	39%
Solids, Liquids and Gases	147	27%
Corrosives, Caustics	30	6%
Cleaning Agents	23	4%
Pest Control Chemicals	14	3%
Gases, Vapors	12	2%
All Other Solids, Liquids	68	13%

Nonfatal Medically-Treated Unintentional Poisonings

Several areas of the county were at greater risk for experiencing unintentional poisoning to children aged 0-6 years:

- The 33140 zip code in Miami Beach had the highest nonfatal unintentional poisoning rate for children aged 0-6 years old (10 cases: 9 ED, 1 hospitalized) and was more than three times higher than the county poisoning rate for this age group.
- The adjacent zip codes of 33054 in the Opa-Locka/Miami Gardens area (14 cases: 12 ED, 2 hospitalized), 33167 in Westview/North Miami areas (9 ED cases) and 33168 in North Miami (10 ED cases) had the 3rd, 4th and 6th highest rates respectively.
- Three zip codes in the Homestead area, 33030 (19 cases: 16 ED, 3 hospitalized), 33033 (18 cases: 15 ED, 3 hospitalized) and 33034 (8 cases: 6 ED, 2 hospitalized), were among the 10 zip codes with the highest rates.

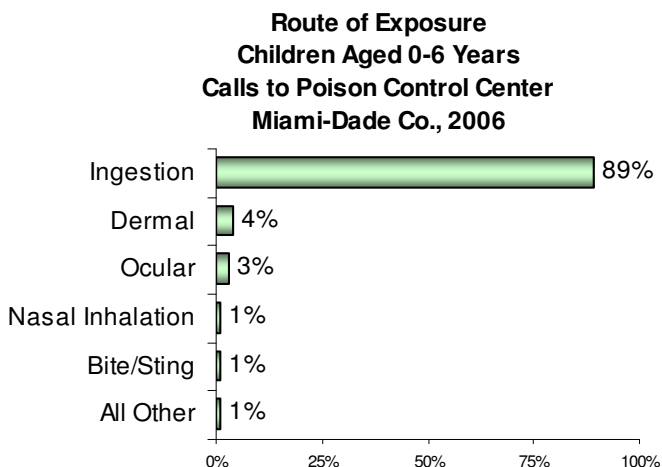


Miami Poison Control Center Calls

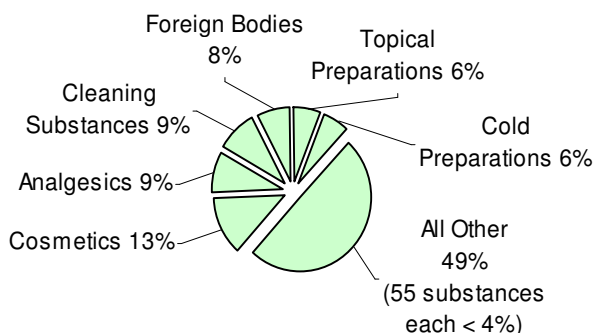


- In 2006, there were 4,673 calls to the Miami Poison Control Center regarding possible poisonings to children six years of age and younger. This would be the equivalent of nearly 13 calls every day for a potential child poisoning.
- 80% of calls to the poison center originated from the child’s residence and another 14% came from a health care facility.
- 89% of the 4,013 calls to the Miami Poison Control Center were able to be managed on-site, eliminating a trip to a health care facility (this excludes calls that originated at a health care facility).
- Of the 4,479 incidents that were followed by the Poison Center for an outcome, 46% resulted in no negative effect on the health of the child. Only one child died and only 5 children suffered life threatening symptoms or significant disability.

- Nine out of ten calls involved the child ingesting a substance. Another 4% involved dermal exposures and 3% of cases were transmitted through the eye.



**Substances Most Frequently Involved in Poison Exposures
Calls to Miami Poison Control Center
Children Aged 0-6 Years, Miami-Dade Co., 2006**



- Cosmetics or other personal care products were the most common substance reported to the PCC for child victims aged 0-6 years, accounting for 13% of all cases.
- Analgesic medications and cleaning substances were the next most common ingested substances, each accounting for 9% of the cases.

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

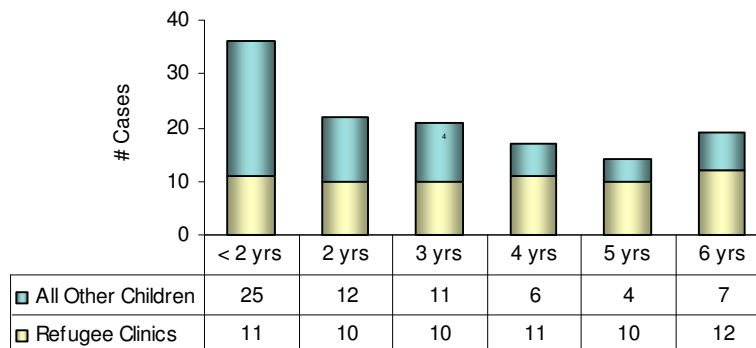


Lead poisoning is a serious, but preventable, public health problem in children. Generally, lead poisoning occurs slowly, a result of the gradual accumulation of lead in bone and tissue after repeated exposure.

Left untreated, lead poisoning can cause long-lasting neurological damage to young children and is most dangerous during the developmental periods of infants and young children under the age of 7 years.

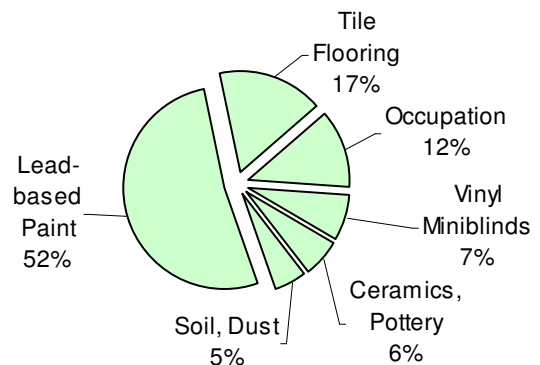
- The health department’s Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program identified 129 positive cases among children under 7 years old in 2006. This is considered to be far below the true incidence because lead screening is estimated to be reaching approximately 1/3 of the at-risk population.
- Nearly ½ the 129 positive lead screenings identified in children aged 0-6 years old involved children 2 years old or younger.
- 50% of the positive screens involved children who were screened at county refugee clinics, indicating that the child likely contracted the disease in another country. Approximately 5% of the more than 1,000 screened refugee children tested positive.

Positive Child Lead Screenings by Victim's Age and Residency Status, Miami-Dade Co., 2006



- Of the 82 cases in 2006 that could identify the source of the lead poisoning, more than one-half were traced to lead-based paint. Other sources of lead exposure included tile flooring, vinyl mini-blinds and ceramics found within the home. An occupational source represents an exposure from someone who lived in the home with the child and who works in a high-risk occupation.

Source of Lead Exposure for Positive Lead Poisoning Cases Children Aged 0-6 Yrs, Miami-Dade Co., 2006



Poisoning Prevention

Drugs and Medicines

- Keep medicines in their original bottles or containers.
- Never share or sell your prescription drugs.
- Keep opioid pain medications, such as methadone and oxycodone, in a safe place that can only be reached by people who take or give them.

Household Chemicals and Carbon Monoxide

- Always read the label before using a product that may be poisonous.
- Turn on the fan and open windows when using chemical products such as household cleaners.
- Never mix household products together. You can make a poisonous gas by mixing chemicals such as ammonia and bleach.
- Keep chemical products in their original bottles or containers. Do not use food containers such as cups, bottles, or jars to store chemical products such as cleaning solutions or beauty products.

Lead Poisoning

- Common sources of lead exposure in children
 - Lead-based paint chips, interior and exterior paint (before 1977)
 - Soil, especially in dense urban areas
 - Dust and debris from older building renovation
 - Lead may be found in the paint or plastics on toys
- Common symptoms of lead poisoning in children include decreased appetite, sleeplessness, learning problems, vomiting, diarrhea and anemia.
- Children who are anemic, who have learning or behavioral problems, who live in or regularly visit a house with peeling or chipping paint built before 1960 should be tested for lead poisoning.
- If you suspect there is lead in your home, have it checked by a qualified inspector. Lead paint removal should be done only by certified professionals who are experienced in working with hazardous materials.

What to do if a Poisoning Occurs

1. Remain calm
2. Call 911 if you have a poison emergency and the victim has collapsed or is not breathing.
3. If the victim is awake and alert, dial the Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222. Try to have this information ready:
 - the victim's age and weight
 - the container or bottle of the poison if available
 - the time of the poison exposure
 - the address where the poisoning occurred
4. Stay on the phone and follow instructions from the emergency operator or poison control center.

Produced by the Miami-Dade County Injury Surveillance System

Data Sources: Hospital Discharge & Emergency Dept. Data,
Miami Poison Control Center, MDCHD Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
PHONE (IFCK): 305-804-7212 (MDCHD): 305-470-5649
E-MAIL: sdearwater@med.miami.edu
<http://dadehealth.org/injury/INJURYintro.asp>

