In 2017, the Oregon Poison Center (OPC) managed 49,227 cases from throughout our region. Of these, 43,371 were about people coming into contact with dangerous or potentially dangerous substances (“exposures”).

**WHO CALLS THE POISON CENTER?**

The poison center takes calls from and manages cases about people of all ages and offers service in 150 languages. In addition to receiving calls from the public, the poison center also receives calls from health care providers, emergency responders and law enforcement officers. In fact, 22% of calls were from health care providers. In 2017, 47% of exposure cases managed by the poison center involved children younger than six, but as in previous years the more serious cases occurred in adolescents and adults.

**2017 exposures by age**

- 47% <6 yrs
- 13% 6-12 yrs
- 10% 13-19 yrs
- 5% >19 yrs

**Did you know?** Poison Centers are managed by doctors, nurses and pharmacists who have extensive training in poison prevention and treatment.
Where do the most poison exposures occur? In 2017, 90% of human exposures occurred at a residence, but they can also occur in the workplace, schools, healthcare facilities, and others. Nearly 67% of the emergency cases reported to the poison center were treated at home, saving millions of dollars in medical expenses. In fact, poison centers save Americans more than $1.8 billion every year in medical costs and lost productivity!

Why do people call the poison center? People call the poison center when they think they may have been exposed to something poisonous. People also call the poison center for information about medications, pesticide use, workplace chemicals, bites and stings, and many more topics. In 2017, 82% of poison exposures involved people who swallowed a drug or potential poison. However, people were also exposed through the lungs, skin, eyes, and in other ways. Most poison exposures were unintentional (75%). Poison centers also received calls about other types of poisonings: medication side effects, substance abuse, malicious poisonings, and suicide attempts.

### Did you know? in 2017 higher call volumes were observed in the warmer months compared to colder months.