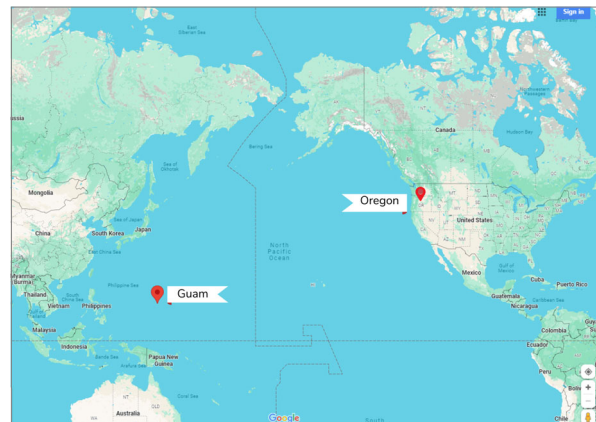


# 2024 REPORT

Serving Oregon and Guam



In 2024, the Oregon Poison Center managed 43,555 cases from residents, healthcare providers and other callers throughout our service area. Of these, 40,240 cases were about people coming into contact with dangerous substances or potential poisons ("exposures"). Confirmed non-exposures and "information calls" (poison-related questions, administrative, prevention/education, etc.) made up the remaining cases managed by the Oregon Poison Center (3,315).



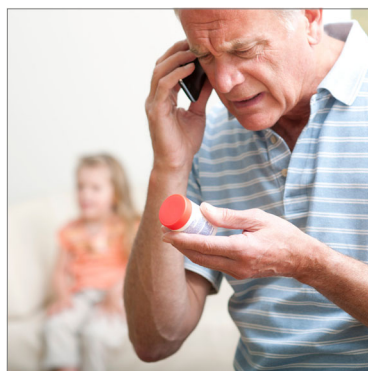
The Oregon Poison Center serves more than 4 million people in a diverse geographic region in the Pacific encompassing Oregon and Guam.

## Who called the poison center in 2024?

Eighty-one percent (81%) of calls to the Oregon Poison Center came from people in Oregon, 7% came from people in Alaska, and <1% came from people in Guam and other nearby islands. The remaining calls came from people outside our service area. The individual counties with the highest volume of calls in 2024 include: Multnomah (6,415), Washington (3,808), Lane (3,217), Clackamas (3,001), Marion (2,747), Jackson (1,784), Deschutes (1,531), and Linn (1,166) Counties in Oregon, followed by Anchorage County (1,046) in Alaska, respectively.

## Exposures, by Age

In 2024, 53% of the poisoning cases managed by the Oregon Poison Center occurred in children and teens under the age of 20. The remaining 47% of poisoning cases in 2024 were about adults aged 20 and older.

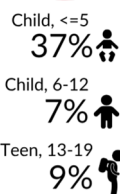
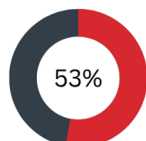


The Oregon Poison Center provides treatment advice to people of all ages 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through the Poison Help® hotline: 1-800-222-1222.

Of the more than 21,000 pediatric poisoning cases managed by the Oregon Poison Center in 2024, almost 15,000 poisoned patients were under 6 years of age. One and two-year olds constitute the majority of this group, representing more than 10,000 cases. Poisonings among young toddlers are typically exploratory and accidental emphasizing the need for caregiver education and safety precautions in the home.

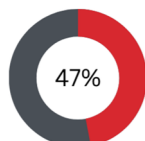
While young children experience the most poisonings, poisonings among teens and adults tend to be more serious due to the types of substances and the quantity of the substances they are exposed to including medicine, alcohol, and illicit drugs. See p. 2 for common substances involved with poisonings, by age.

### Children <=19



\*Child, unknown age, <1%

### Adults >= 20



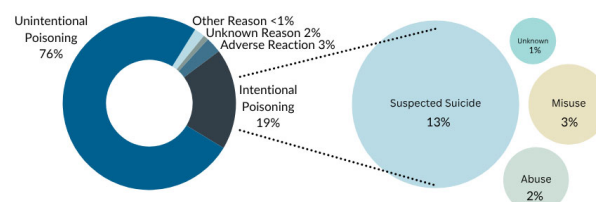
\*Adult, unknown age, 5%

## Service Area Change in 2024

As of July 1, 2024 our contract with the State of Alaska for poison center services ended. It has been our pleasure to serve the people of Alaska over the last 23 years and we appreciate the collaborative relationships with Alaska's healthcare providers, public health department and community partners.

Note: Six months of Alaska data is included in this report (Jan-Jun, 2024). Future reports will reflect Oregon and Guam data only.

## Exposures, by Reason



Most poison exposures in 2024 were accidents, or **unintentional**. Seventy-six percent (76%) of the cases managed by the Oregon Poison Center were coded this way, meaning someone came in contact with a poison in a way they did not intend to. Additional reasons for poisoning cases include: **Adverse reactions** to food, drugs or other substances (3%), **unknown** (2%) and **other reasons** (<1%).

Nineteen percent (19%) of poisoning cases were **intentional**; attributed to suspected suicide (13%), misuse (3%), abuse (2%) and other intentional-unknown reasons (<1%).

# Common substances involved with poisonings

Top Exposure Categories by Age, 2024								
	Total/All Ages		Children <=5		Children/Teens 6-19		Adults Age >=20	
Rank	Substance	Exposure Count	Substance	Exposure Count	Substance	Exposure Count	Substance	Exposure Count
1	Analgesics	5,731	Cleaning substances (household)	1,491	Analgesics	1,279	Analgesics	2,970
2	Antidepressants	3,330	Analgesics	1,465	Antidepressants	840	Antidepressants	2,253
3	Cleaning substances (household)	3,069	Cosmetics/personal care products	1,465	Antihistamines	637	Cardiovascular drugs	2,187
4	Cardiovascular drugs	2,815	Foreign bodies/toys/miscellaneous	1,248	Stimulants and street drugs	423	Sedative/hypnotics/antipsychotics	1,789
5	Cosmetics/personal care products	2,379	Dietary supplements/herbals/homeopathic	988	Cardiovascular drugs	364	Alcohols	1,412
6	Sedative/hypnotics/antipsychotics	2,210	Plants	895	Sedative/hypnotics/antipsychotics	286	Anticonvulsants	1,092
7	Antihistamines	2,156	Vitamins	799	Cough & Cold Preparations	264	Hormones and hormone antagonists	976
8	Foreign bodies/toys/miscellaneous	1,941	Topical Preparations	557	Plants	261	Antihistamines	958
9	Plants	1,568	Antihistamines	553	Dietary supplements/herbals/homeopathic	238	Chemicals	838
10	Stimulants and street drugs	1,798	Gastrointestinal Preparations	416	Anticonvulsants	163	Stimulants and street drugs	760

## Trend Watch: Nitrous Oxide

The Oregon Poison Center has seen a spike in cases of nitrous oxide misuse in 2024 (56) compared to the previous year (15) mirroring this growing trend, nationally.

Nitrous oxide is used in medicine for its sedative and pain prevention properties. It is also sold as a food processing propellant for whipped cream and culinary food use. When used as a recreational drug, sometimes called “whippets,” “whippits” or “galaxy gas,” it induces euphoric and hallucinogenic effects. Often thought to be harmless, nitrous oxide can cause severe neurologic, cardiovascular, and psychiatric symptoms with repeated use. Inhaling nitrous oxide outside the supervision of a medical provider can result in serious adverse health effects, including death.

The inhalant is an increasingly popular recreational substance, particularly among young people as a low cost and currently legal substance, widely available online, at head shops, gas stations, grocery and convenience stores. Despite warnings from health officials, nitrous oxide is being sold in large colorful canisters with fruity flavors which may be appealing to young people. A new Oregon law requiring age verification ensuring nitrous oxide buyers are at least 18 will take effect January 1, 2026.



A large canister of Nitrous oxide for sale in a convenience store.

## What would patients do without the poison center?

Based on 2024 patient feedback, poison center callers reported the emergency department as the most likely alternative to calling the poison center. Other alternatives, may result in unnecessary medical care or delays in life-saving treatment. Poison centers serve an important role in the healthcare system, providing fast, free expert treatment advice over the phone, oftentimes preventing unnecessary hospital visits and medical bills.

Updated 07/02/2025

2024 Patient Feedback	
If not calling the poison center	3-month avg., Oct—Dec
Call or go to the emergency department	34.0%
Wait to see if symptoms appear	24.5%
Call or go to a physicians office	24.0%
Something else	13.0%
Call 911	4.5%