

## PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN FROM INHALANTS

### Prevent inhalant abuse:

- Talk to your teenagers about the dangers of inhalants.
- Demonstrate safe use of medicines and household products. Teach children to be careful – these are poisons if used the wrong way.
- Include inhalants when you teach about substance abuse (drugs, alcohol, tobacco). Inhalants are poisons, pollutants, and fire hazards. But, they have drug-like effects. They can kill if used the wrong way.
- Keep track of inhalants in your home. Where are they? Are they being used up too quickly?

### Detect inhalant abuse:

- Are large quantities of household products purchased or missing?
- Do you find stashes of plastic bags, smelly rags, or empty containers?
- Does your child have rashes on the face or a chronic sore throat or mouth?
- Do you smell a chemical odor on your child's breath or clothes?
- Are there other signs of substance abuse?
  - changes in behavior, friends, grades, or grooming
  - changes in weight or health for no obvious reason.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN SOMEONE IS HUFFING

- Remain calm.
- Keep victim calm.
- Do not argue with the user! When someone is high on inhalants, stress can cause the heart to stop.
- If the victim won't wake up, is not breathing, or is having seizures, call **911**.
- If there are other symptoms, or no symptoms, call Poison Control: **1-800-222-1222**.

## TO LEARN MORE ABOUT INHALANTS

### For a list of resources:

- Visit [poison.org](http://poison.org)
- Call Poison Control at **1-800-222-1222**

### For a poison emergency, and for questions about inhalants and other poisons:

Call Poison Control at **1-800-222-1222**. Your call is free and confidential. Experts will help you right away, 24 hours a day.



National Capital Poison Center

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## inhalant abuse



## What parents need to know about INHALANTS

National Capital Poison Center



24 HOURS A DAY

**1-800-222-1222**

## INHALANT ABUSE

### What is it?

Inhalant abuse means trying to get high by breathing in vapors, fumes, or aerosol sprays. These are ordinary household products – and they are poisons.

### Who does it?

Usually, pre-teens and teenagers. Nearly one in five 8th graders has tried inhalants.

### When?

Before school. During school. After school. Nights. Weekends.

### Where?

Home. A friend's home. School. In cars. Just hanging out. Anywhere without supervision.

### Why?

In the words of one teen, "Because they can. Because they're bored. Because they're upset." In short, for any reason or no reason.



### How?

Huffing. Bagging. Sniffing. Pouring a product into a bag and breathing it in. Pouring a product onto a rag or clothing and inhaling. Putting the nozzle into the mouth and taking a deep breath.

### So what?

Inhalants kill.

1-800-222-1222

## THE POISONS ARE RIGHT UNDER YOUR NOSE...

...and also under your sink, in your shed or garage or workroom, in your office, and in your yard. They are at school, in stores and at work.

These ordinary, legal products are safe when used according to directions. They are poisons if swallowed or sniffed, huffed, or bagged.

More than a thousand products can be abused by inhaling. Common examples include anything in an aerosol can, solvents, and fuels:



- Aerosol deodorant
- Air freshener
- Computer gas "duster"
- Correction fluid



- Gasoline
- Glue (solvent-based)
- Hairspray
- Helium



- Lighters and lighter refills
- Markers (solvent-based)
- Nail polish, nail polish remover
- Nitrous oxide (whipped "whippets")



- Paint thinner
- Propane
- Spray paint

1-800-222-1222

## INHALANTS KILL



**The first time, or any time, could be the last time.**

### What happens?

Breathing an inhalant is breathing a poison. The substance goes into the bloodstream right away. Then, it goes to the brain, the heart, and other body organs. Effects may be short term or permanent – or fatal.

### Short term effects:

Dizziness. Nausea. Headache. Confusion. Slurred speech. Lack of coordination. Passing out.

### Long term or permanent effects:

Brain damage. Nerve damage. Kidney damage. Liver damage. Muscle damage. Bone marrow damage. Addiction, both physical and psychological.

### Any time: "Sudden Sniffing Death"

can happen to anyone abusing an inhalant. The brain loses oxygen. Stress hormones flood the body. The heartbeat becomes irregular. Death follows rapidly. This can happen the first time...the hundredth time...any time. The body never becomes used to the effects of inhalants.

**Call FAST to treat a poisoning!**

**Call FIRST to prevent a poisoning!**

1-800-222-1222