Preventing: Bites, Stings, Plant Poisonings & More!

Poison Safety in the Great Outdoors

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Utah Poison Control Center (UPCC)
Objectives

• Identify potentially harmful plants and critters typically found in Utah
• Describe outdoor poison prevention tips
• Define first aid for poisoning
• Explain the role of the UPCC and what happens when you call
Before Heading Outdoors

- Know Your Destination Well
  - Trails, available services, etc.
- Make Sure You Have Emergency Numbers Available
  - Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222
- Research to find out potential hazards
  - Plant Guide: utahpoisoncontrol.org
  - Utah State Parks: http://stateparks.utah.gov/
  - US Forest Service: http://www.fs.fed.us/
On the Trail

Watch Your Step

• Know your surroundings

• What may happen if you step off a trail or enter an area you are unfamiliar with?

Use Your Senses

• If something doesn’t look, feel, or seem right, don’t go near it

• Listening to your surroundings
Poisonous Plants

UPCC Poisonous Plant Guide: utahpoisoncontrol.org

- Baneberry (*Actaea rubra*)
- Deadly Nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*)
- Death Camus (*Zigadenus species*)
- Donkey’s Tail (*Euphorbia myrsinites*)
- False Hellebore (*Veratrum species*)
- Jimson Weed (*Datura wrightii*)
- Lupine (*Lupinus argenteus*)
Poisonous Plants

- Snow on the Mountain (*Euphorbia marginata*)
- Stinging Nettle (*Urtica dioica*)
- Wart Weed, Spotted Spurge (*Euphorbia maculata*)
- Water Hemlock (*Cicuta douglasii*)
- Western Monkshood, Wolfbane (*Aconitum columbianum*)
- Poison Ivy (*Toxicodendrun rydbergii*)
- Poison Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*)

Oils from some plants (poison ivy, stinging nettle) can stay on clothes. If exposed, change & wash clothing before wearing again.
Mushrooms

• How do you tell the difference between a edible mushroom and a poisonous one? Unless you are very experienced in mushroom identification, YOU CAN’T!

• Don’t forage for food
Utah has 31 different species of snakes....7 are venomous

- Sidewinder (*Crotalus cerastes*)
- Speckled Rattlesnake (*C. mitchellii*)
- Mojave Rattlesnake (*C. scutulatus*)
- Western Rattlesnake (*C. viridis*)
- Hopi Rattlesnake (*C.V. nuntius*)
- Midget-faded Rattlesnake (*C.V. concolor*)
- Great Basin Rattlesnake (*C.V. lutosus*)

If bitten call the Poison Center 1-800-222-1222
Sidewinder \((Crotalus cerastes)\)

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Venomous Reptile

- Gila monster (*Heloderma Suspectum*)
  - Only in southwestern area of Utah
  - NO antidote
Black Widow Spider

- Characteristic hour glass on underside (Yellow to Red)
- Found outdoors in woodpiles, under stones, in hollow stumps, in small animal burrows.
- The bite of a black widow spider may be painful or may go unnoticed.

**Prevention:** Wear long sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors, inspect and shake out clothing and shoes before getting dressed
Venomous Spiders

Hobo Spider

- Has a distinctive web that is horizontal and flat leading into a middle funnel shaped section.
- Found outdoors in areas with dead wood and found at or below ground.
- Symptoms can include headache, bulls-eye shaped appearance

Prevention: Wear clothing that covers skin, do not disturb wood piles or outdoor debris, use lamps (yellow light) that attract fewer insects (as insects are food for spiders).

Scorpions

Things to Know

• Bark scorpion (*Centruroides exilicauda*)
  -only species in U.S with potent venom
  -generally in Arizona, but some reports in Kane County

• Hairy scorpion (*Hadrurus arizonensis*)
  - Desert areas of Utah
  - Sting can be very painful
Bee & Hornet Stings

- Avoid attracting bees and hornets while eating outdoors.
- Keep food covered until ready to eat, they are especially attracted to ripe fruit and soft drinks.
- Be careful not to disturb bee/wasp/hornet nest:
  - in the ground
  - in a tree or bush
- If Stung…
  - Remove stinger immediately
  - Wash area with soap and water
  - Apply a cool compress
  - Call 911 immediately if someone is experiencing a severe reaction
Ticks latch onto humans and animals to search for feeding site.

- Can transmit diseases (Rocky Mountain Fever, Lyme)…rare in Utah and can be treated if caught early.
- Conduct full body search after being outdoors.
- If a tick is found, use tweezers to grasp tick and pull straight out.

Prevention:
- Avoid wooded, bushy areas and fields with high grass.
- Cover legs and arms-tuck shirts into pants and pants into socks.
- Apply insect repellant with DEET onto skin and clothing before entering tick habitat.
Animal Bites

- Infection is primary concern
- Rabies virus from infected animal is a serious disease
- Most common animals: skunks, raccoons, foxes, coyotes, bobcats and bats

- Wash bites and scratches with soap and water
- Seek medical attention if bitten

Prevention: Do not touch wild animals---dead or alive
Mosquito Bites

- Most mosquitos bite between dusk and dawn
- Can transfer diseases such as Wet Nile Virus

Prevention:
- Use insect repellent containing DEET when mosquitos are present
- Follow the directions on the repellent label for safe use
Calls to UPCC

- 18 Snake
- 31 Spiders
- 197 Mushrooms
- 960 Plants

UPCC 2014
If A Poisoning Happens

**Swallowed**
Call the poison center before giving food or drink. Do not induce vomiting

**Inhaled**
Fresh Air Right Away
Call the poison center

**Eyes**
Flush eye for 15 minutes with lukewarm water in a cup 2-4 inches from face
Call the poison center

**Skin**
Remove clothing and rinse skin with water for 15 minutes
Call the poison center

Available 24 Hours a Day 365 Days a Year
Services are Free and Confidential

[POISON Help logo]

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[Poison Help number]

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[Poison Help number]
Emergency Action For Poisoning

• Remain calm, but don’t wait for the person to look or feel sick; some exposures can have a delayed effect

• If the person is unconscious, having convulsions, or difficulty breathing; call 911 otherwise call the UPCC

1-800-222-1222
Calling the Poison Center

• Questions the UPCC specialist may ask:
  – How the person is feeling or acting right now
  – Age and weight of person
  – Name/description of plant or critter
  – When it happened
  – Name and phone number
Utah Poison Control Center Staff

• Registered nurses
• Registered pharmacists
• Medical doctors
• Health educators
Save the poison center number in your cell phone… someday it may save you back!

1-800-222-1222
Happy Trails!