

Saving lives, reducing cost and providing the best care for Wisconsin residents



2020
Annual
Report



Wisconsin Poison Center, located in Milwaukee, is a valuable statewide resource that provides 24-hour, toll-free poison information. Statistics from 2019 illustrate our mission to consistently deliver comprehensive and accurate information to callers from any potential poison or drug. For more information, please visit www.wisconsinpoison.org.

24-hour hotline: 1-800-222-1222



Wisconsin
Poison Center



How does the Wisconsin Poison Center (WPC) help during times of pandemic or disaster?

The WPC provides emergency information for people exposed to toxic amounts of substances, including but not limited to household products, drugs or medications, chemicals, plants, and animal or insect bites. In addition, poison centers provide important standardized public health messaging during times of disaster or pandemics.

The poison center staff answers calls thousands of times a day. During disasters or pandemics, the nation's system of regional poison centers is set up to collect telephone call data and assists in monitoring exposures and poisonings. This is achieved by:

- Identifying disaster-related products through product coding
- Collecting exposure data on those affected in one state or across multiple states
- A continuous upload of case data to a national repository in near real time
- Tracking and monitoring disaster-related exposures of interest
- Scripted public health messaging

What makes poison centers essential resources during disaster response?

- 24/7/365 availability
- Highly trained nationally poison-certified nurses and pharmacists who answer questions
- Ability to quickly disseminate scripted health messaging to the public and medical providers
- Ability to provide surge capacity from one state's poison center to another in a less affected state

Examples of COVID-19 related calls to U.S. poison centers that have increased between January 1 through May 10 compared to the same time last year:

Disinfectant Case Counts

| | 2019 Wisconsin | 2020 Wisconsin | 2019 National | 2020 National |
|----------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| January | 17 | 15 | 1,621 | 1,706 |
| February | 14 | 18 | 1,430 | 1,675 |
| March | 19 | 28 | 1,756 | 3,401 |
| April | 9 | 39 | 1,628 | 3,609 |
| May 10th | 6 | 14 | 573 | 966 |
| Total | 65 | 114 | 7,008 | 11,357 |

Bleach Case Counts

| | 2019 Wisconsin | 2020 Wisconsin | 2019 National | 2020 National |
|----------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| January | 33 | 36 | 3,070 | 3,274 |
| February | 39 | 42 | 2,924 | 2,960 |
| March | 30 | 66 | 3,184 | 5,068 |
| April | 45 | 62 | 3,242 | 5,739 |
| May 10th | 14 | 19 | 1,155 | 1,747 |
| Total | 161 | 225 | 13,575 | 18,788 |

Hand Sanitizer Case Counts

| | 2019 Wisconsin | 2020 Wisconsin | 2019 National | 2020 National |
|----------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| January | 27 | 17 | 1,936 | 2,029 |
| February | 20 | 31 | 1,813 | 2,116 |
| March | 36 | 67 | 1,850 | 3,244 |
| April | 40 | 55 | 1,749 | 2,727 |
| May 10th | 10 | 21 | 600 | 957 |
| Total | 133 | 191 | 7,948 | 11,073 |

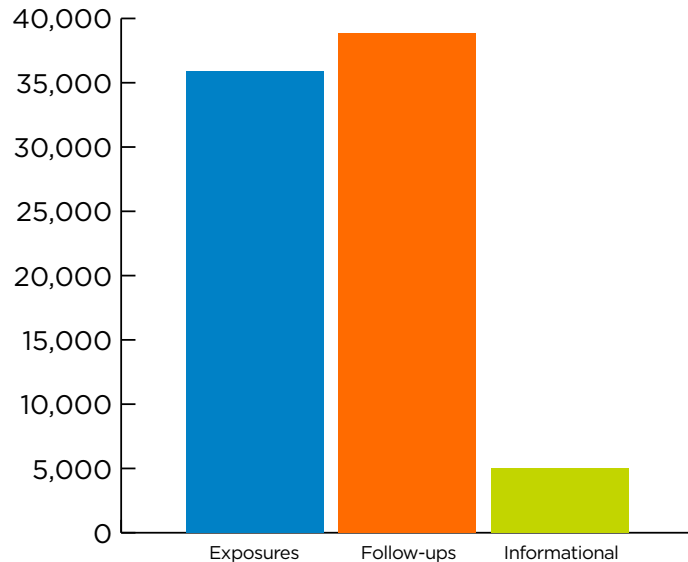
Poison centers across the country submit the information about all substances that the poison centers receive calls about. All poison center data is housed in the National Poison Data System. As a result, the increasing trend in cases involving cleaning products was easily identified and was published in the article entitled "Cleaning and Disinfectant Chemical Exposures and Temporal Associations with COVID-19 in Mortality and Morbidity Weekly Report" (MMWR). MMWR, April 20, 2020/69 (16); 496-498.

Poison Center Case Volumes in 2019

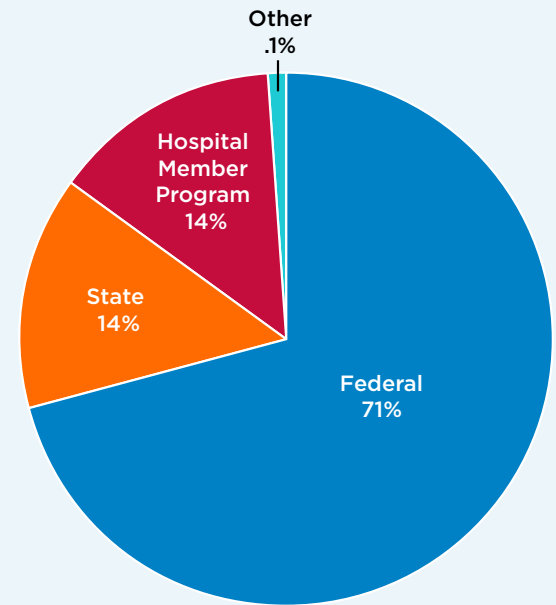
Wisconsin Poison Center managed 38,436 cases in 2019, but that number tells only half the story.

Besides receiving an average of 107 reported cases per day, toxicology-trained pharmacists and nurses also call back to follow up on patients to ensure their safety and the highest quality of care. Hospital patients throughout the state are checked an average of twice a day until they are discharged. This provides continuity of care and allows for adjustment of treatment recommendations as needed. Patients calling from home who are exposed to certain substances are called back to monitor for potential symptoms and provide reassurance.

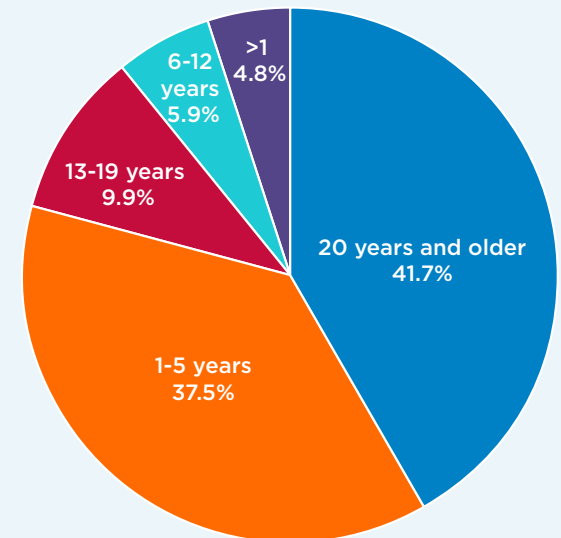
Call/case volumes



External funding sources



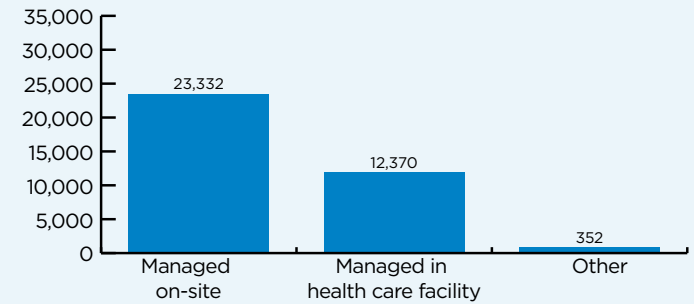
Age of exposed patient



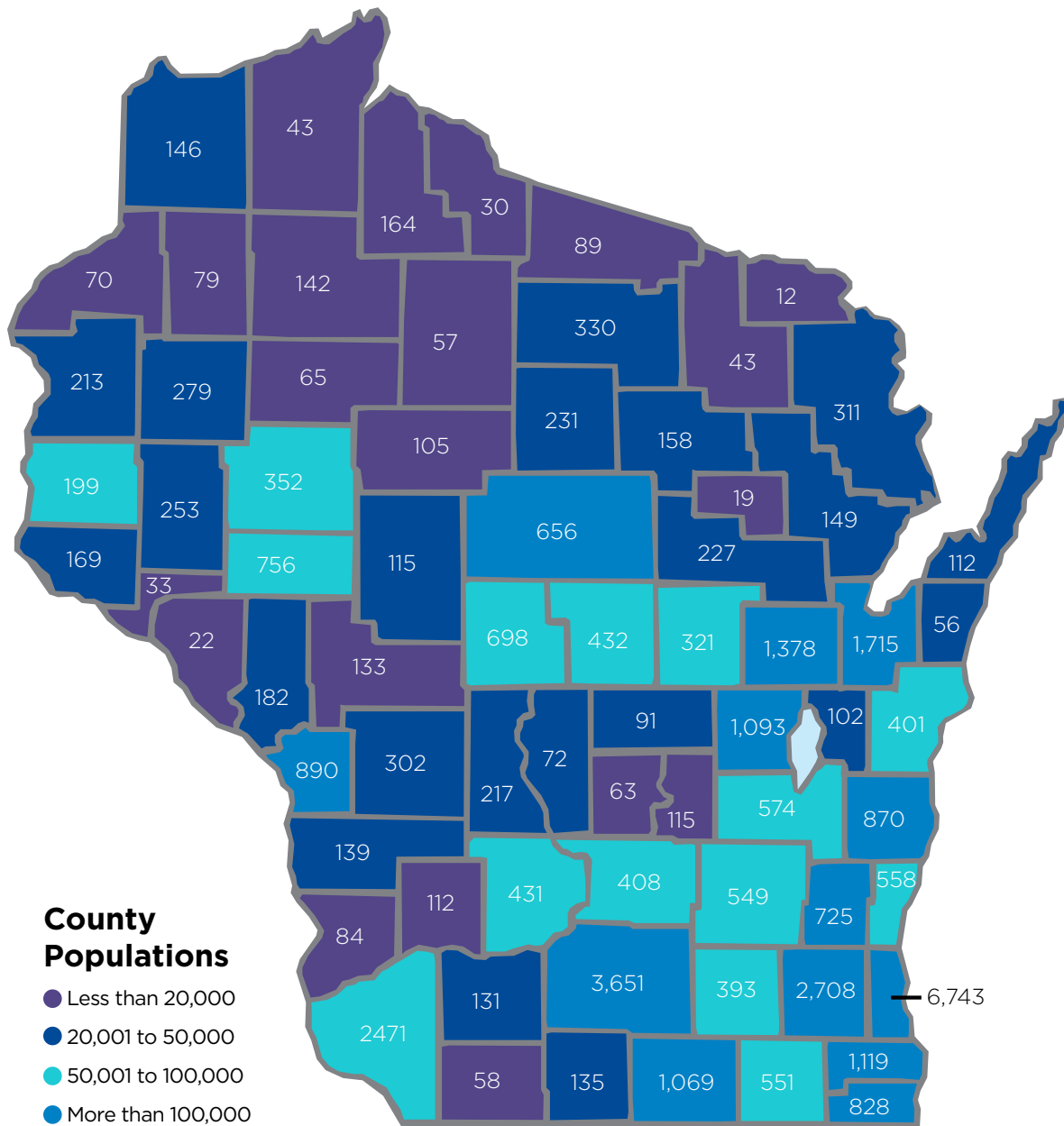
Hospital membership program update

This program allows patient providers from all hospitals throughout the state of Wisconsin an opportunity to collaborate with toxicologists to ensure the best treatment and outcomes for the poisoned or drug overdosed patients. In exchange for a membership fee, all member facilities gain 24/7/365 access to board-certified toxicologists, toxicology-trained nurses and pharmacists. The program is in its fifth year, and over 99 percent of the hospitals in Wisconsin opted for membership in 2019.

Treatment site



Number of cases handled by county



Top 10 substances involved in poisonings

Age 5 and younger

1. Personal care products
2. Pain medications
3. Household cleaning products
4. Foreign bodies/toys
5. Topical preparations (creams and lotions)
6. Vitamins
7. Antihistamines
8. Dietary supplements
9. Plants
10. Pesticides

Age 6 to 19

1. Pain medications
2. Antidepressants
3. Sedatives/antipsychotics
4. Antihistamines
5. Street drugs/stimulants
6. Cardiovascular medications
7. Personal care products
8. Cough and cold preparations
9. Household cleaning products
10. Foreign bodies

Age 20 and older

1. Pain medications
2. Sedative hypnotics/antipsychotics
3. Antidepressants
4. Cardiovascular medications
5. Alcohols
6. Household cleaning products
7. Anticonvulsants
8. Hormones and hormone blockers
9. Fumes and gases
10. Antihistamines

Since 2009, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control reports the No. 1 cause of injury deaths for adults ages 25-64 as unintentional poisoning. Health care facilities are treating increasing numbers of severely overdosed patients.

10 Leading Causes of Injury Deaths by Age Group, United States – 2018

| Rank | Age groups | | | | | | | | | | Total |
|------|---|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | <1 | 1-4 | 5-9 | 10-14 | 15-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65+ | |
| 1 | Unintentional Suffocation 977 | Unintentional Drowning 443 | Unintentional MV Traffic 341 | Suicide Suffocation 361 | Unintentional MV Traffic 6,308 | Unintentional Poisoning 15,353 | Unintentional Poisoning 14,978 | Unintentional Poisoning 13,620 | Unintentional Poisoning 10,854 | Unintentional Fall 35,522 | Unintentional Poisoning 62,399 |
| 2 | Homicide Unspecified 125 | Unintentional MV Traffic 292 | Unintentional Drowning 130 | Unintentional MV Traffic 360 | Unintentional Poisoning 4,245 | Unintentional MV Traffic 6,886 | Unintentional MV Traffic 5,068 | Unintentional MV Traffic 5,328 | Unintentional MV Traffic 5,629 | Unintentional MV Traffic 7,697 | Unintentional MV Traffic 37,991 |
| 3 | Unintentional MV Traffic 80 | Homicide Unspecified 152 | Unintentional Fire/Burn 99 | Suicide Firearm 202 | Homicide Firearm 4,107 | Homicide Firearm 4,348 | Suicide Firearm 3,222 | Suicide Firearm 3,787 | Suicide Firearm 4,421 | Suicide Firearm 6,375 | Unintentional Fall 37,455 |
| 4 | Homicide, Other Spec., Classifiable 68 | Unintentional Fire/Burn 123 | Homicide Firearm 57 | Homicide Firearm 134 | Suicide Firearm 2,995 | Suicide Firearm 3,429 | Suicide Suffocation 2,688 | Suicide Suffocation 2,481 | Unintentional Fall 2,766 | Unintentional Unspecified 4,607 | Suicide Firearm 24,432 |
| 5 | Undetermined Suffocation 45 | Unintentional Suffocation 112 | Unintentional Suffocation 30 | Unintentional Drowning 86 | Suicide Suffocation 2,237 | Suicide Suffocation 3,117 | Homicide Firearm 2,569 | Suicide Poisoning 1,396 | Suicide Suffocation 1,934 | Unintentional Suffocation 3,793 | Homicide Firearm 13,958 |
| 6 | Unintentional Drowning 39 | Unintentional Pedestrian, Other 70 | Unintentional Other Land Transport 20 | Unintentional Fire/Burn 52 | Suicide Poisoning 454 | Undetermined Poisoning 824 | Suicide Poisoning 990 | Homicide Firearm 1,382 | Suicide Poisoning 1,491 | Unintentional Poisoning 3,269 | Suicide Suffocation 13,840 |
| 7 | Homicide Suffocation 30 | Homicide Other Spec., Classifiable 66 | Homicide Unspecified 17 | Unintentional Suffocation 43 | Unintentional Drowning 431 | Suicide Poisoning 753 | Undetermined Poisoning 780 | Unintentional Fall 1,131 | Unintentional Suffocation 858 | Adverse Effects 3,100 | Unintentional Suffocation 6,701 |
| 8 | Undetermined Unspecified 30 | Homicide Firearm 54 | Adverse Effects 16 | Unintentional Other Land Transport 37 | Homicide Cut/Pierce 256 | Unintentional Drowning 482 | Unintentional Fall 502 | Undetermined Poisoning 876 | Homicide Firearm 802 | Unintentional Fire/Burn 1,404 | Suicide Poisoning 6,237 |
| 9 | Unintentional Natural/Environment 22 | Unintentional Natural/Environment 38 | Unintentional Pedestrian, Other 15 | Unintentional Poisoning 23 | Undetermined Poisoning 224 | Homicide Cut/Pierce 455 | Unintentional Drowning 414 | Unintentional Drowning 456 | Adverse Effects 766 | Suicide Poisoning 1,133 | Undetermined Unspecified 6,082 |
| 10 | Two Tied 18 | Unintentional Firearm 30 | Homicide, Other Spec. NEC 14 | Suicide Poisoning 20 | Suicide Fall 205 | Unintentional Fall 345 | Homicide Cut/Pierce 340 | Unintentional Suffocation 401 | Undetermined Poisoning 704 | Suicide Suffocation 1,014 | Adverse Effects 4,604 |

Poisoning deaths

Data source: National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), National Vital Statistics System.

Produced by: Office of Statistics and Programming, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, CDC using WISQARS™.

Wisconsin Poison Center

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