

# **U.S. CPSC warns that narcotics, water beads, in nation's water, a growing threat to children**

“WASHINGTON, D.C. – During National Poison Prevention Week, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is highlighting serious, growing hazards facing young children, including a surge in unintentional poisoning from narcotics, and additional hazards identified with water bead products.

CPSC's just-released report on unintentional pediatric poisonings found that 98 children under the age of 5 died from poisonings in 2022, a 66% increase from 2021. This increase was largely linked to narcotics and psychodysleptics. Deaths in this category nearly doubled in one year, from 33 in 2021 to 59 in 2022.

The report underscored the growing risks associated with these substances, with pediatric poisoning deaths in the U.S. rising steadily since 2019 from a low of 17 deaths in 2018; the lowest since CPSC was created in 1972.

Additionally, the report found that there were 68,600 emergency department-treated (ED-treated) injuries in children under 5 in 2022, a nearly 10% increase from the estimated 62,600 injuries in 2021.

**Notably, the estimated injuries from pediatric poisonings involving acetaminophen, ibuprofen, and narcotics medications increased from 2021 to 2022:**

- Acetaminophen incidents increased from an estimated 4,700 related ED-treated injuries to 5,700;

- Ibuprofen incidents increased from an estimated 2,000 related ED-treated injuries to 3,600; and
- Narcotic medication incidents increased from an estimated 1,200 related ED-treated injuries to 2,500.

“The recent rise in pediatric poisonings is heartbreaking,” said CPSC Chair Alex Hoehn-Saric. “Keeping drugs, as well as cleaning supplies, laundry packets, and button batteries safely out of reach is vital to protecting children. The CPSC is committed to preventing such tragedies by enforcing laws requiring safe packaging of poisonous substances, holding companies accountable for selling deadly products, and arming caregivers with information on how to keep their little ones safe.”

### **CPSC Issues Product Safety Warnings for Water Bead Products:**

CPSC also today issued two product safety warnings related to new evidence pointing to toxicity in some water bead products, which may lead to adverse health effects in children.

In separate warnings, CPSC urged consumers to throw away water bead products from Jangostor and Tuladuo due to acrylamide levels that present the risk of toxicity. Neither Chinese company has agreed to an acceptable recall

The product warnings highlight that water bead hazards can go beyond ingestion, expansion and obstruction inside a child. Acrylamide is a known carcinogen. The large water beads in CPSC’s warnings contain levels of acrylamide in violation of the Federal Hazardous Substances Act.

CPSC data show that nearly 7,000 water bead-related ingestion injuries were treated in emergency departments in the U.S. from 2018 through 2022. CPSC is also aware of the death of a 10-month-old girl in 2023.

**Protect young children from poisoning dangers following a few**

## **safety tips:**

### **Drugs or Medications:**

- Keep drugs and medications safely stored in a locked cabinet or box and out of the reach of children.
- Keep drugs and medicines in their original child-resistant containers and never in unsecured containers.
- Properly discard unfinished or unused drugs and medicines.

### **Water Beads:**

- CPSC Recommendation: Remove water beads from any environment where young children may be present.
- Store water beads in a secure container and location where young children cannot easily access them.
- Do not allow children to play with water beads unsupervised.

### **Laundry Packets:**

- Store laundry packets in their original containers and out of a child's sight and reach.
- Do not let children handle laundry detergent packets.

### **Household Cleaning Supplies:**

- Keep chemicals and cleaning supplies safely stored in a locked cabinet or box and out of the reach of children.
- Keep household chemicals in their original child-resistant containers.

### **Button Cell or Coin Batteries:**

- Keep products with accessible batteries away from children if the battery compartments do not have a screw closure or if the compartment is damaged.
- Check the toys in your home to make sure battery compartments are secured.
- Do not allow children to play with or be in contact with button cell or coin batteries.

In Case of Emergency: Call National Poison Help Line at 800-222-1222, 24 hours a day.”-Consumer Product Safety Commission.

CPSC’s Annual Report on Pediatric Poisoning Fatalities and Injuries