

Lesson 3: What Do Poisons Look and Smell Like? (3rd-5th Grade)

For this lesson you will need several poison look-a-likes. Examples**

Pine-Sol® & Apple Juice	Comet® & Parmesan Cheese
Blue Windex® & Blue Gatorade®	Red juice & Red colored liquid Tylenol®
Ex-lax® & Hershey's® chocolate bar	Aspirin and Smarties candy
Tylenol® tablets and Red Hots®	Cold Relief Pops & Lollipops
Tums® & Sweet Tarts®	Gummy Vites® multivitamins & GummyBears®

(Show look-a-likes while discussing how tricky poisons)

***Note: The above items were chosen for illustrative purposes only. The Georgia Poison Center does not intend to imply that these items are dangerous if used as directed.*

****Note: Keep the examples locked up when not in use! Never leave them out, unsupervised!**

Discussion:

What is a poison? A poison is something that can make you sick, hurt you or even kill you if you eat or drink it, smell it, splash it in your eyes or on your skin. Poisons come in many shapes, sizes and colors.

Poisons can be tricky. They can look like things that are good to eat or drink. Poisons can look like your favorite drinks or look like something good to eat. A medicine can look and taste like food; sometimes medicine can look like candy.

Question: Why is it important to always have an adult give you your medicine? (Wait for children to answer)

A) *Because they know what medicine to give you and how much to give.*

Poisons can be in pretty colors like red, blue, green, pink or purple. They can also be brown or clear like water. Some poisons smell good, like perfume and some poisons smell bad.

Question: What are some things that can be good if used in one way, but dangerous if used in another way? (Wait for children to answer)

A) *Perfume and make-up can be used to make us smell good and look pretty, but can be a poison if swallowed or gets in the eye. Cleaning products can keep the house free of germs, but can be a poison if swallowed or splashed in the eyes or on the skin. Medicine is used to make us feel better when we are sick, but can be a poison if we take too much, take the wrong medicine or take it the wrong way.*

(Explain that labels on these containers often have caution words such as danger, harmful, poison, etc.)

Poisons can be solids, like a pill or plant. Poisons can be a liquid; some come in spray bottles and look like they may be fun to play with. Poisons can also be a gas which we cannot see.

Question: Does anyone know what carbon monoxide is?

A) *Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas that we cannot see, smell or taste.*

- ◆ **Teach children - never take medicine or vitamins by yourselves. A grown-up must always give you your medicine.**
- ◆ **Teach children - never taste, touch or smell anything that could be a poison.**
- ◆ **Teach children - always ask a grown-up first if you are not sure what something is.**
- ◆ **Teach children - poisons should be stored in a locked cabinet out of reach and sight of children. Never try to open locked cabinets, adults lock up poisons to keep you safe.**

Finally, if you or someone you know should ever get poisoned, the Georgia Poison Center is always ready to help you. They are opened 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year. You can call them at 1-800-222-1222!

*****Note: If a person is non-responsive, has difficulty breathing, is not breathing, or is having seizures call 9-1-1 immediately*****

(If time permits, end the lesson with an activity from the Activity Sheets section)

