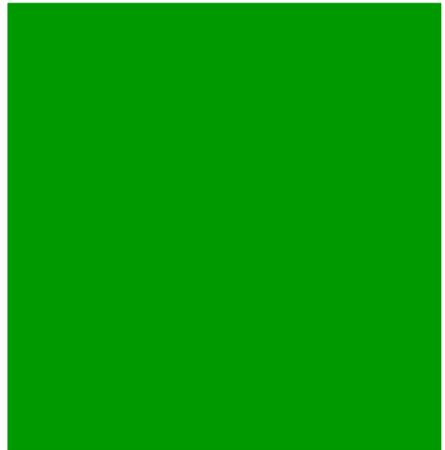
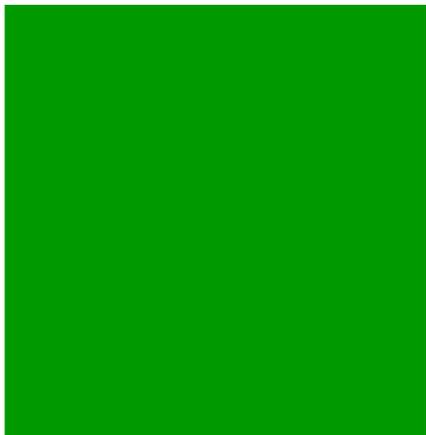




2014



virginia
poison
center
annual report



As a nationally certified regional poison center, the Virginia Poison Center's (VPC) mission is to prevent accidental poisonings through public education programs, provide optimal cost-effective care to patients with toxic exposures, and facilitate clinical toxicology education to physicians and other healthcare providers.

The worker who's been splashed with a caustic floor stripper

The confused senior who's just used the roach powder thinking it was sweetener for her tea

The summer camp counselor with an ugly spot on his leg, possibly from a poisonous spider bite

The frightened parent of a toddler found chewing on a fistful of leaves from a houseplant

The depressed teen who's taken an entire bottle of pills in a suicide attempt

The apartment dweller with a sudden cough and headache after inhaling the exterminator's flea spray

Each has been exposed to a potential poison. Each needs help.... Fast. But, only one requires care in an emergency department. Do you know which one? The experts at the Virginia Poison Center do. They help over a hundred callers every day with life-saving advice that allows most to avoid expensive, unnecessary medical treatments.

Poison Centers Reduce Healthcare Costs

Poison centers are not just a life-saving component of our health care system... they are an extremely cost-effective one.

How does a toll-free emergency hotline staffed by nurses 24 hours daily save healthcare dollars? Simply put, poison center expertise saves lives and dollars by quickly determining the best care for each case, and then guiding treatment so that each patient gets *exactly* what is needed: nothing more, nothing less.

By avoiding the expense and risks of unnecessary medical treatments, the VPC saves millions of healthcare dollars every year. When contacted from the site of exposure, more than 90% of cases are safely managed over the telephone without the need for ambulance transport or emergency room visit.

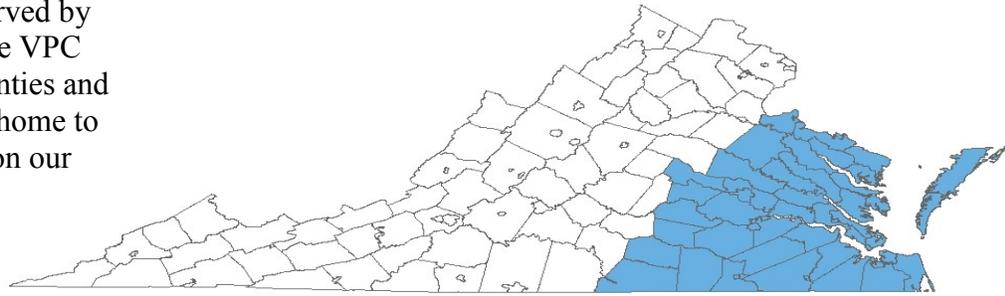
Every day, our staff also assist doctors and other healthcare professionals who consult the VPC for expert advice on how to care for patients who have been exposed to a poison. Research has shown that consultation with a poison center can significantly shorten the patient's length of stay in a hospital, resulting in lower costs.

Finally, several studies have examined the cost-effectiveness of poison center services and found that every dollar spent on poison centers produces a cost savings of \$7 to \$36.



Our service region

The Virginia Department of Health has designated the geographic regions served by each of the state's poison centers. The VPC currently provides services to 35 counties and 16 independent cities. This region is home to 3.19 million citizens who depend upon our expertise every day of the year.



Caller's city or county In 2014, the VPC received calls from nearly every county in Virginia. Although most came from within our designated service region, there were more than 2,000 calls from other locations throughout the state and from outside Virginia.

County	All Call Types				
Accomack.....	282	James City County.....	532	Portsmouth.....	915
Amelia.....	105	King and Queen.....	37	Powhatan.....	148
Brunswick.....	68	King George.....	97	Prince George.....	133
Caroline.....	188	King William.....	148	Richmond City.....	2,916
Charles City County.....	33	Lancaster.....	125	Richmond County.....	52
Chesapeake.....	1,517	Lunenburg.....	37	Southampton.....	145
Chesterfield.....	2,518	Mathews.....	83	Suffolk.....	729
Colonial Heights.....	189	Mecklenburg.....	231	Surry.....	33
Dinwiddie.....	96	Middlesex.....	82	Sussex.....	90
Essex.....	134	New Kent.....	168	Unknown.....	168
Franklin City.....	59	Newport News.....	1,952	Virginia Beach.....	3,467
Gloucester.....	382	Norfolk.....	2,013	Westmoreland.....	156
Hampton.....	1,025	Northampton.....	77	Williamsburg.....	202
Hanover.....	1,030	Northumberland.....	62	York.....	226
Henrico.....	2,264	Nottoway.....	98		
Hopewell.....	344	Petersburg.....	542		
Isle of Wight.....	191	Poquoson.....	81		

Annual call volume changing

Incoming calls to the Virginia Poison Center are changing in complexity: less calls from homes involving unintentional pediatric exposures, and increased calls from health care facilities managing sick, complex patients.

29,868 calls in 2014

In 2014, incoming call volume included

- 24,835 humans who were exposed to a potential poison
- 729 animals who were exposed to a potential poison
- 4,304 calls for information only, no one was exposed to a poison

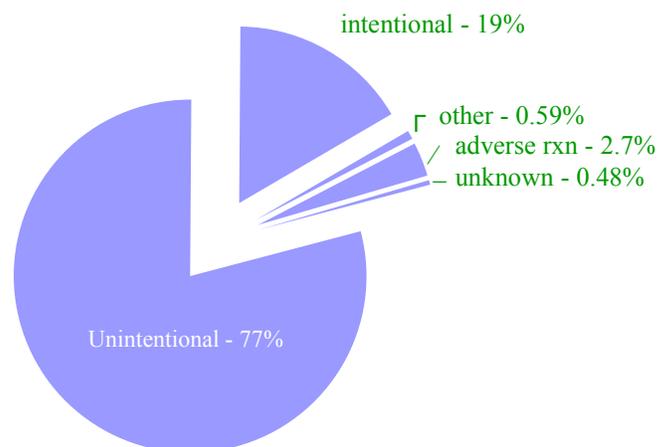
In addition to fast response to their initial call, each caller receives individual attention from a specialist until his or her case is completely resolved. To provide this individualized treatment advice and careful monitoring, the



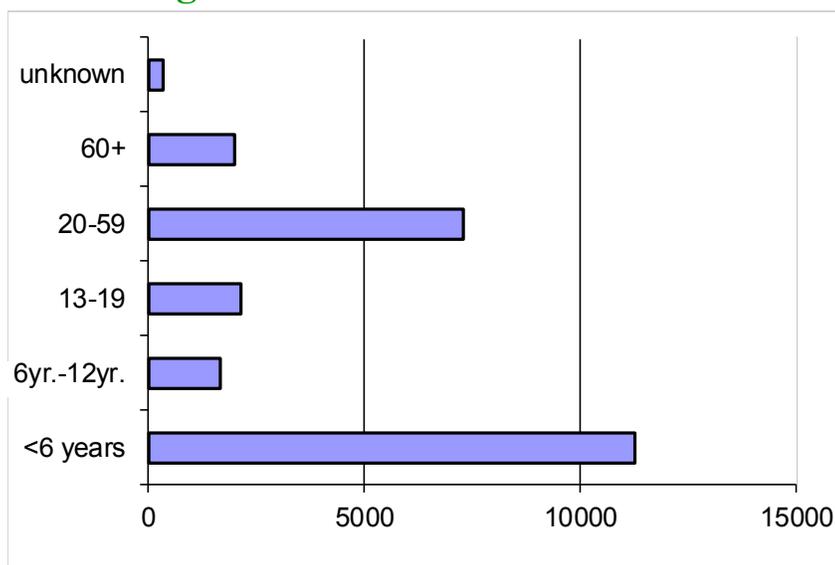
Note: These statistics reflect only those poisonings that were reported to the Virginia Poison Center during 2009. The data does not describe ALL poisonings in the state.

Reason for poison exposures

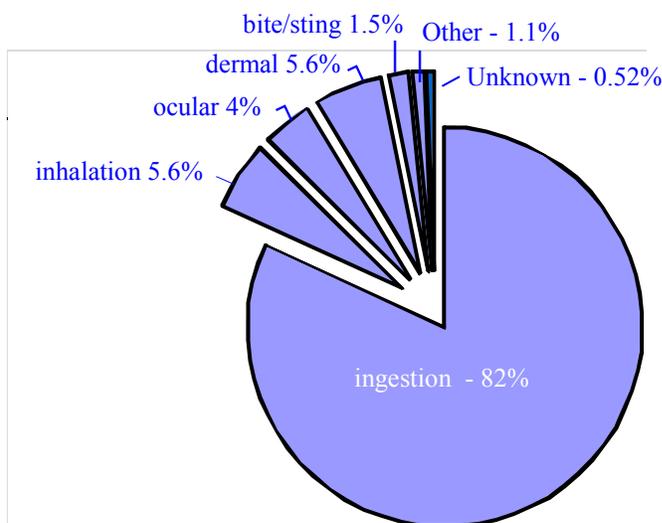
In 2014, 77% of reported poisonings were *unintentional*, or accidental exposures. Examples of these include most childhood poisonings, as well as bites/stings, occupational exposures, environmental exposures and mistakes with medicines or other products. Nineteen percent of exposures were *intentional* such as a suicide attempt or deliberately misusing a medicine or chemical product. Another common reason to call the VPC is for assistance with an adverse reaction to a medicine, food or other product that has been used in the correct way but is associated with a negative health effect: these cases accounted for about 3% of all exposures.



Patient ages

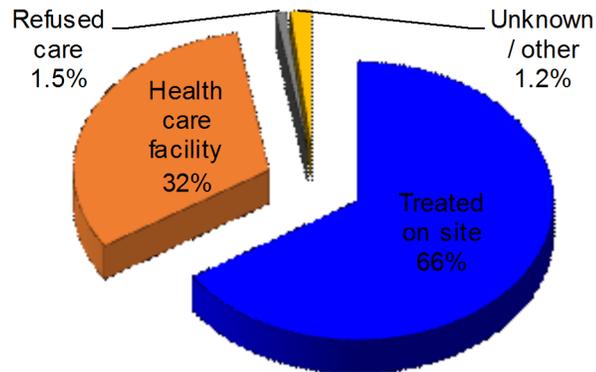


Route of exposure



Where do our patients receive treatment ?

One of the poison center's most important roles is to quickly advise whether a poison exposure is serious enough to require treatment at a health care facility. Fortunately, with poison center advice, most patients can be safely managed without referral to a doctor or emergency department. **This saves individuals, families and the Commonwealth millions of dollars every year by preventing the costs of unnecessary medical treatment.** Studies have shown that when no poison center is available, many patients will simply dial 911 and incur the expense of both EMS transport and emergency department care for a poisoning that could have been safely treated without going to a hospital.



Patients Treated at Health Care Facilities

VCU Medical Center (Richmond)	653
Chippenham (Richmond)	614
Riverside Regional (Newport News)	522
St. Mary's Hospital (Richmond)	443
Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters (Norfolk)	377
Sentara Princess Anne ED (VA Beach)	313
Chesapeake General	298
Sentara Virginia Beach	284
Southside Regional Medical Center (Petersburg)	271



Sentara Leigh (Norfolk)	247
Maryview Medical Center (Portsmouth)	238
Naval Medical Center (Portsmouth)	220
Memorial Regional Medical Center (Hanover)	207
St. Francis Medical Center (Richmond)	193
Sentara Hampton CarePlex	169
Sentara Williamsburg Regional Hospital	160
Sentara Norfolk General	152

Types of poisons: pharmaceutical & non pharmaceutical

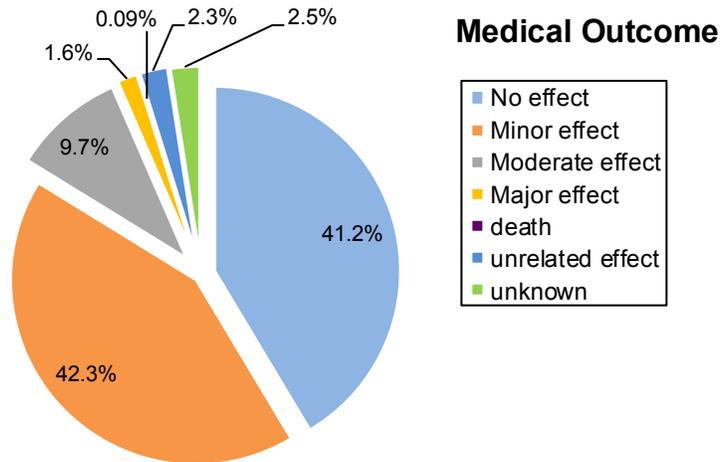
Pharmaceuticals

Pain relievers	3,637
Sedative/hypnotic/antipsychotics	2,110
Antidepressants	1,573
Cardiovascular drugs	1,430
Antihistamines	1,424
Topical preparations	907
Cold and cough preparations	851
Stimulants and street drugs	843
Vitamins	745
Anticonvulsants	695
Hormones and hormone antagonists	674
Antimicrobials	659

Non-Pharmaceuticals

Cosmetics/personal care products	2,275
Cleaning products (household)	2,173
Foreign bodies/toys/miscellaneous	1,070
Alcohols	986
Pesticides	852
Plants	489
Bites and envenomations	462
Arts/crafts/office supplies	355
Fumes/gases/vapors	355
Food products/food poisoning	350
Hydrocarbons	329
Other/unknown nondrug substances	280

Medical outcome



Fatal Poisonings

In Virginia, poisoning currently causes more deaths than any injury other than motor vehicle crashes. However, the vast majority of these fatal exposures are not reported to a poison center. More complete data describing the actual number of deaths from poisoning is obtained from hospital records and medical examiner reports. In 2008, these other sources reported 735 deaths from poison exposures. This represents an increase of 91% over the past decade.

In 2014, the VPC was consulted on 23 cases which resulted in a fatality. Young children are involved in about half of all cases reported to poison centers; however, deaths from poisoning are rare in this age group. The VPC was consulted for assistance in the care of one small child who died from smoke inhalation. The other 22 fatal cases reported to the VPC all involved teens or adults, ages 16 to 85 years. About 13% of these adult fatalities were thought to be unintentional, and 39% suicidal. In 13% of the cases the victim's intent could not be determined. Medications or drugs were the cause of 74% of adult fatalities.

Medications or drugs involved in the adult deaths included prescription medications, over-the-counter medications and street drugs such as cocaine. Two adults died in separate incidents after they ate an unidentified wild mushroom. In one death, the exact poison could not be determined.



Outreach

Poison Prevention Programs

Most calls to the Virginia Poison Center are for advice about an *unintentional* poisoning. The vast majority of these exposures could have been avoided, so the VPC strives to make the public aware of how they can prevent serious injury from poisons. The center responds to requests from schools, civic groups, employers, child care centers, and state and local agencies, and provides a variety of programs on poison prevention. Every year, the VPC is represented at dozens of community events such as health fairs, where our displays, magnets and printed materials reach thousands of attendees with information on poison safety. During 2014, the VPC participated in 50 of these educational events, from a senior safety summit in Yorktown to teaching children in Powhatan summer camps about poisonous snakes and insects. These events were attended by more than 5,000 people. To provide information about the causes, treatment and prevention of poisoning, more than 250,000 pieces of printed educational materials were distributed throughout our service area.



National Poison Prevention Week

Observed annually during the third week of March, NPPW focuses attention on the need to prevent unintentional poisoning. The VPC partners with local and state groups in a variety of activities to promote the observance each year. One of these annual activities sends students at the VCU School of Pharmacy to pre-school classrooms to teach hundreds of children in the Richmond metropolitan area about the dangers of poisons, using a lively musical puppet program starring “Spike” the porcupine.

Virginia Poison Center staff

Director.....	S. Rutherford Rose, PharmD, FAACT
Medical Director.....	Kirk Cumpston, DO, FAAEM
Fellowship Director.....	Brandon Wills, DO, MS
Outreach Educators.....	Michele Burt, RN, CSPI
	Sherri Ellis, RN, CSPI
Administrative Assistant.....	vacant
Toxicologist.....	Michelle Troendle, MD

Nursing Staff : Specialists in Poison Information

Michele Burt RN, MS	Tammy Scott RN, CSPI
Virginia Cheatham RN	Tammy Smith RN
Sherri Ellis RN, CSPI	Ben Vedomske RN, CSPI
Judith Jones RN, MS, CSPI	Cheryl Wade RN, CSPI
Rebecca McNicol, RN	Evelyn Waring RN, CSPI
Kathy Morris RN, PNP, CSPI	



Specialists in poison information are the individuals who staff the center’s emergency phone lines 24 hours daily. These are experienced registered nurses who have received additional training in the evaluation and treatment of toxic exposures. They have earned the CSPI designation by successfully passing a national board certification examination in this clinical specialty.



Virginia Poison Center

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