

HEALTH INFORMATION

Laundry Detergent Pods

Laundry detergent products packaged in “single dose packs” are colorful and attractive to children. Product names include Tide Pods, Arm & Hammer 3 in 1 Paks, All free+clear Mighty Paks, Purex Ultra Packs and All Mighty Packs Liquid Laundry Unit Dose.



Photo credit: Tide.com

Why are these a problem?

Most liquid laundry detergents cause only one episode of vomiting and commonly no problems at all. But physicians are seeing that the laundry pods are much more dangerous.

- Poison Centers began to get many calls as soon as these products were sold. When a child bites on the packet, it bursts easily, and detergent fills the mouth.
- The largest concern is when the detergent gets into the airway and lungs.
- Almost immediately, the child chokes, coughs and tries to spit out the detergent.
- Vomiting can occur and may go on for hours.
- Some children become very weak from coughing and vomiting and have to be admitted to hospitals for medical care.
- Most children recover without serious effects; but in August 2013, a child in Florida died several hours after swallowing the contents of a laundry detergent packet.

What can I do?

- **Call for advice** from medical professionals at the Virginia Poison Center at **1-800-222-1222** if a child bites into a laundry detergent pod or opens the packet and has detergent on their skin.
- Wash exposed skin areas with lots of soap and water.
- **Call 911** if the child is having any difficulty in breathing or is unconscious.

Virginia Poison Center

VCU Health

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