

Taking care in the home

Accidents are most likely to occur in out-of-the-ordinary circumstances, camping in the bush, playing a rough sport, hiking or swimming in unfamiliar territory — right? Wrong!

Every year thousands of accidents and injuries that could have been prevented happen to people right in their own homes, often in full

view of friends and family. In some instances they are fatal, but knowing what to do before emergency help is obtained can often save a life.

POISONS

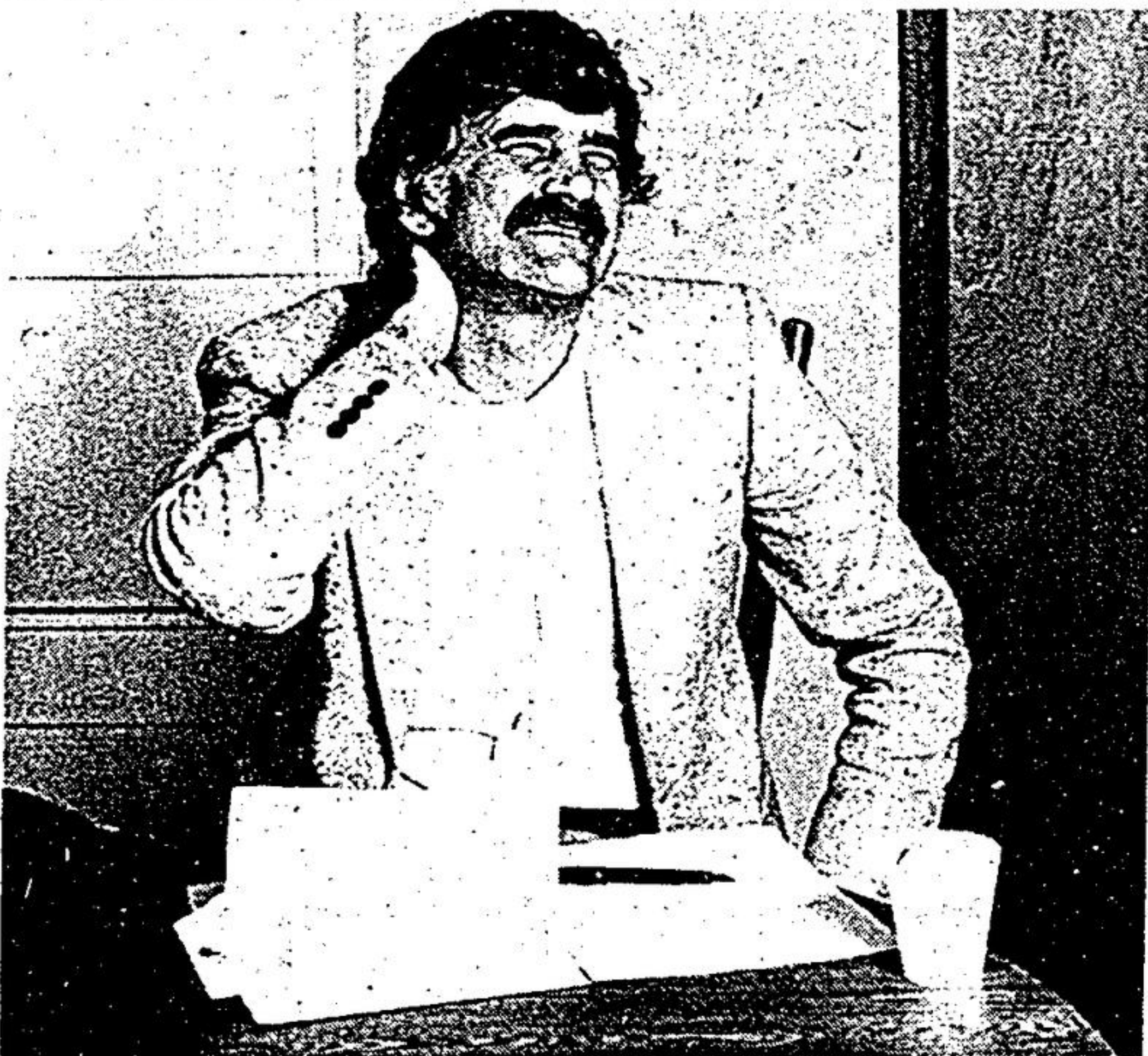
Most households contain enough poison to send a family and all their neighbors to the emergency ward. Medicines, headache pills,

perfumes, after-shave lotion, household cleaners, shoe polish . . . the list is endless. All can be fatal if swallowed, especially to young children who have lower physical resistance than adults. And most poisons are within children's easy reach on bathroom and kitchen shelves.

TO PREVENT

ACCIDENTAL POISONING:

- keep all poisonous substances where curious children can't reach them and, preferably, under lock and key.
- label poisons properly and store where they can't be mistaken for anything else.
- always check the label of a container before using contents.
- buy child-proof drug bottles if there is a child in the house.
- dispose of all leftover medicines by pouring down the drain, and flush pills or capsules down the toilet.



Ministry of Health
Ontario

If no other help is available by phone, the victim should be moved to nearest source of emergency treatment — after these elementary first aid measures have been taken:

Substance Swallowed

CORROSIVES

Such as lye, drain cleaner, bleach, strong acids, etc.

KEROSENE OR OTHER PETROLEUM PRODUCTS

Such as fuel oil, gasoline, kerosene, turpentine, lighter fluid, furniture polish, etc.

OTHER IDENTIFIED POISONS OR OVERDOSES

UNIDENTIFIED POISON OR OVERDOSE

Treatment

DONOT INDUCE VOMITING.

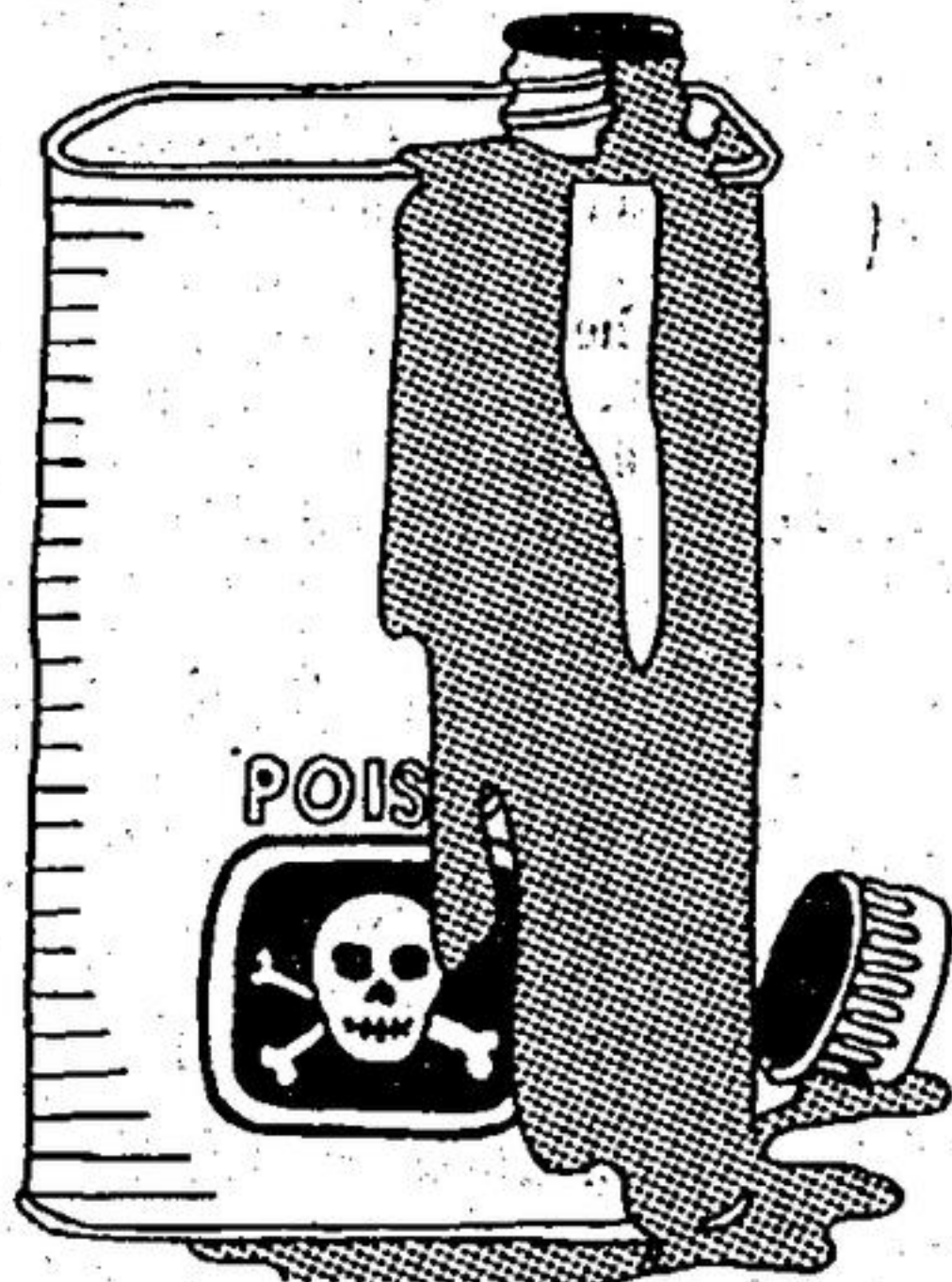
If victim is conscious, large quantities of milk, fruit juice, or water should be swallowed before victim is taken for emergency treatment.

DONOT INDUCE VOMITING.

If victim is conscious, encourage him to swallow fluids before being taken for emergency treatment.

If victim is conscious, milk should be swallowed. Then try to induce vomiting by giving him syrup of ipecac (available from your pharmacist) in recommended dosage, or by gently touching the back of the throat with finger tip. Do not wait more than five minutes for victim to vomit. Take victim to nearest source of emergency treatment.

If you cannot tell what has been swallowed — or if you know it was a corrosive (acid or alkali) — take victim for emergency treatment immediately. **DONOT INDUCE VOMITING.** but if victim has already vomited, take sample of the vomit with you if possible, for identification.



If poison is swallowed, call an ambulance immediately, then follow the steps outlined on the chart at the left.

SPRAINS AND FRACTURES

We tend to take sprains and fractures (breaks) lightly — your brother only broke his arm; your neighbor only sprained an ankle. But many sprains and fractures, ignored or improperly cared for after treatment, can put you "out of commission" for a while and permanently restrict you from sports or regular activities.

REMEMBER . . .

- don't reach or stretch beyond your limit — get assistance.
- don't bend from the waist when lifting — get close to the object and with back straight up and



down, move up from a squatting position, lifting with thigh muscles.

- prevent falls — hold stair railings and use anti-slip mats on all floor areas and in the bath tub.
- keep stairways and pathways clear. Falling over an object left

"temporarily" there, is a significant cause of injury.

- see that the children put away toys which can be dangerous left lying around.
- if you use a step or extension ladder, make sure it's securely supported.

If you are injured, don't ask for trouble by ignoring the injury. Consult a doctor right away.

CHOKING

Any object small enough to fit in the throat — piece of food, a



button, a denture — can kill. Thousands of healthy people die each year by choking to death, usually in full view of people who could help, if they knew what to do.

There's not time to wait for an ambulance when someone is choking to death. Asphyxiation will kill even a healthy individual in about four minutes.

The victim of choking will not cough, sputter or in fact make any kind of sound. Unlike the victim of a heart attack, he or she cannot speak at all. If eating, the person will stop suddenly and usually stare straight ahead in shocked silence, unable to speak, breathe or tell you what is wrong.

Immediate action is necessary! By all means send someone for a doctor or an ambulance, saying what has happened — but don't wait for them to come. Help must be given immediately to the victim of choking.

FOUR METHODS TO RELIEVE CHOKING

THE THUMPING METHOD:

- thump the casualty several sharp blows between the shoulder blades with the hand

THE FINGER METHOD:

- if the victim is conscious tell him to open his mouth. If unconscious, pry the mouth open gently with a spoon or dinner knife handle or some other suitable smooth object.
- folding your thumb and other fingers out of the way, insert your first and second fingers (index and middle) into the mouth.
- the block will be behind the hard hump at the back of the tongue. Push your fingers over this hump and feel for the lodged object. It may help to hold the tongue with a serviette and pull it gently toward you.

- now using your fingers like tongs, try to dislodge the object. Or you may be able to hook the block out with one finger.
- don't give up easily! Keep trying — but realize that urgency is of the utmost importance. If this method doesn't seem to be working, use the methods in the order outlined.

THE LEANING-OVER METHOD:

- place yourself behind the victim, whether he or she is standing or sitting.

● let the victim's head, arms and upper body hang forward.

- wrap your arms around the waist and make a fist with both your hands held tight together.
- place your double fist against the victim's abdomen, just above the navel and below the ribs.
- now jerk your fist into the victim's stomach with a quick upward thrust. Don't be afraid to hurt.
- repeat several times if necessary.

THE LYING-DOWN METHOD:

- if the victim is lying down, make sure he is lying on his back.
- straddle the victim, facing him, with your knees astride his hips.
- place the heel of your "stronger" hand on the victim's abdomen, slightly above the navel and below the rib cage. Place your other hand on top of the "stronger" hand.
- exert pressure by pushing into the victim's stomach with a quick upward thrust.
- repeat several times if necessary.

If you are attempting to assist an infant or child the same life-saving techniques can be used but less pressure will be required. If the child is small he may be placed across your knee while you attempt the life-saving methods described above.

A very small child may be held up by the feet and thumped on the back. Knowing what to do could save a life.

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Test yourself with St. John first aid quiz

Test your knowledge of First Aid by answering the following questions to the best of your ability.

1. Can you give three types of Artificial Respiration.
2. Which is the most effective of the three and when should you not use it?
3. If you burned your hand on steam from the kettle, how would you treat it?
4. Do you know the difference between heat stroke and heat exhaustion and how would you treat one to avoid the other?
5. What First Aid procedure would you use for a casualty suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning?
6. If a child cut his leg on a metal toy and it is bleeding profusely, what should you do?
7. How do you stop a nose bleed?
8. How do you place someone in the recovery position.
9. How do you remove a particle of grit from someone's eye?
10. Name four ways in which a Triangular Bandage is used in First Aid.

Don't peek at the answers till you have completed the Quiz. Then score 10 points for each correct answer. Answers on page 8.

If you score less than 70, you need to enroll in a St. John Ambulance First Aid course. Call (416) 923-8411 or the St. John Ambulance Branch nearest you. You'll be glad you did!