



Independence Day is fast approaching and fireworks are synonymous with celebrations throughout the nation. Last year's celebrations were muted due to COVID-19, but events may be more common this year with the gradual re-opening of facilities.

If you choose to celebrate the Fourth of July with fireworks, the Michigan Poison Center at the Wayne State University School of Medicine advises participants to stay safe during National Fireworks Safety Month.

Each July, poison centers across the country receive increased calls for exposures to firecrackers, fireworks snakes, and other fireworks. Fireworks contain a variety of poisonous chemicals such as arsenic, barium chlorate, phosphorus, and potassium nitrate. The Michigan Poison Center at the Wayne State University School of Medicine wants you to avoid injuries and unexpected exposure to the hazardous chemicals found in these products. Mild symptoms from eating fireworks like upset stomach, vomiting and diarrhea can occur. Life-threatening symptoms such as irregular heartbeat, difficulty breathing and seizures can develop with significant exposure.

Fireworks often considered relatively safe for children, such as sparklers, burn at temperatures reaching 1,500° F, which can cause severe burns. According to the National Safety Council, the majority of burns related to fireworks treated in emergency rooms occur in people younger than 20 years of age.

The Michigan Poison Center at the Wayne State University School of Medicine recommends the following safety tips to ensure your Fourth of July celebrations remain safe and enjoyable:

- **Wear** eye protection
- **Avoid** picking up lighted fireworks
- **Keep out of reach** of children
- **Avoid** letting small children handle fireworks, including sparklers
- **Older children should be** supervised by an adult when using fireworks
- Create an area where **only** the person setting off the fireworks can enter, and prohibit anyone else from getting close
- **Avoid** lighting or using fireworks inside or near a house or garage
- **Avoid** lighting fireworks near other people, or flammable materials and liquids like fuel
- **Avoid** attempting to re-light or handle fireworks that have malfunctioned
- **Have a bucket filled with water nearby** to fully extinguish fireworks, including those that have malfunctioned
- Light **one** firework item at a time
- Keep animals **indoors** in a quiet area
- **Avoid** using fireworks if you are using drugs or alcohol
- **Avoid** forcing anyone to vomit if fireworks have been eaten

The safest way to watch fireworks is by enjoying professional displays. Check your municipality's website to find professional fireworks displays near you.

For questions about firework safety, or if someone has been exposed to fireworks, call your

Michigan Poison Center
at
1-800-222-1222

Fast, free, and confidential expert advice from health care professionals