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**24-Hour Poison  
Information and  
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American Association  
of Poison Control  
Centers*



## Laundry Pods Are No Joke.

The Iowa Poison Control Center has long warned the public to keep laundry pods out of the reach of small children and elderly adults. Now that same warning is being extended to teens and young adults who are eating the detergent packs as a part of what is being called the Laundry Pod Challenge. Teens are puncturing the pods with their teeth and posting videos of the results online. Biting into a laundry pod is no joke since there is a potential for serious complications.

Swallowing even a small amount of the highly-concentrated detergent found in pods, even if people bite into and spit the contents out, can cause diarrhea and vomiting. Excessive vomiting may occur, leading to dehydration. Also, burns to the mouth, throat and stomach may occur. Inhaling detergent into the lungs has caused breathing problems serious enough for the person to need a ventilator to help them breathe. There have also been reports of corneal abrasions (scratches to the eyes) when the detergent gets into the eyes.

In 2017 alone, there were 10,570 exposures to liquid laundry detergent packets according to the American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC). The AAPCC recommend the following safety precautions for households using these detergents:

- Always keep detergent containers closed, sealed, and stored up high, out of the reach of children when not in use.
- Avoid opening the product container when children are around. Many childhood exposures occur when the product is in use by an adult.
- Use child-resistant packaging. But remember – nothing is child-proof!
- Read the label. Follow the directions on the product label.
- Teach all ages of children about the dangers of poisons.
- Call the Poison Help line at **1-800-222-1222** immediately if you suspect someone has come in contact with these detergents.

Laundry pods are a highly concentrated detergent meant to clean clothes ... They should not be played with, whatever the circumstance is, even if meant as a joke. It's not a risk worth taking.

The Iowa Poison Control Center is available 24 hours a day by calling **1-800-222-1222**. The service is free and confidential and also available for non-English speakers.

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