

# North Carolina Poison Control 2020 Annual Report



POISON  
**Help**  
1-800-222-1222  
NC POISON CONTROL



# When Seconds Count

## We're Here for NC

NC Poison Control nurses and pharmacists provide live, on-the-spot medical assistance for poison exposures and questions about potential poisons. NC Poison Control serves all 100 counties in North Carolina and can be reached by phone (**1-800-222-1222**) or by chat (NCPoisonControl.org) any time of day or night. Board-certified toxicologists are available to assist the staff and other healthcare providers 24/7.

Calling or chatting with NC Poison Control can often prevent an unnecessary hospital or urgent care visit. That's because NC Poison Control staff are specially trained in managing poison exposures. In fact, nearly three-fourths of our calls and chats in 2020 were managed right at the site of the call or chat. If treatment at a healthcare facility is required, NC Poison Control will assist healthcare providers.

A poison exposure can happen in an instant. Take a moment to program the NC Poison Control number, **1-800-222-1222**, into your phone.

# By the Numbers



43% of people who needed help from poison control were **adults.**



**79,940**  
calls and chats  
taken



**1 out of 5**  
calls and chats  
came from a  
healthcare provider.



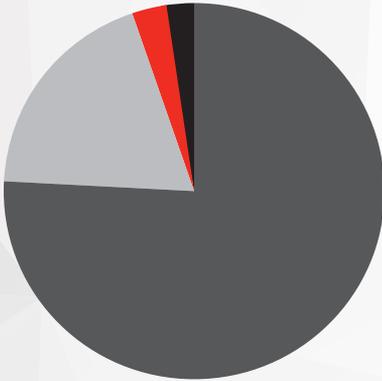
**71%**  
of cases were  
managed at home  
(or at the call site).



**Pain relievers\*** were the **#1 substance** prompting people to contact NC Poison Control.

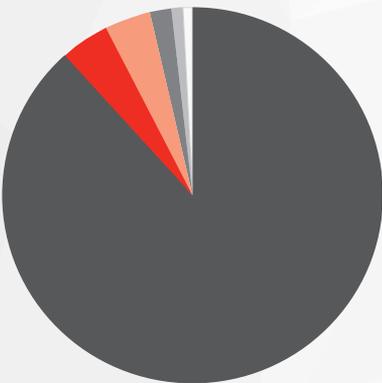
\*Over-the-counter and prescription

# Reason for Exposure



● Unintentional	77.78%
● Intentional	16.98%
● Adverse Reaction	2.78%
● Other	2.46%

# Route(s) of Exposure



● Ingestion	83.50%
● Inhalation/Nasal	6.52%
● Ocular	4.15%
● Dermal	6.58%
● Bite/Sting	2.27%
○ Other/Unknown	1.93%

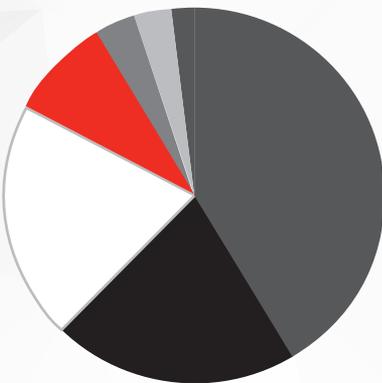
The exposure total % will be greater than 100%, as some people were exposed by more than one route.

## Patient Age



● < 6 years	41.26%
● 6-12 years	5.82%
○ 13-19 years	7.88%
● 20-59 years	31.70%
● > 60 years	11.29%
● Unknown Age	2.05%

## Relationship to Patient



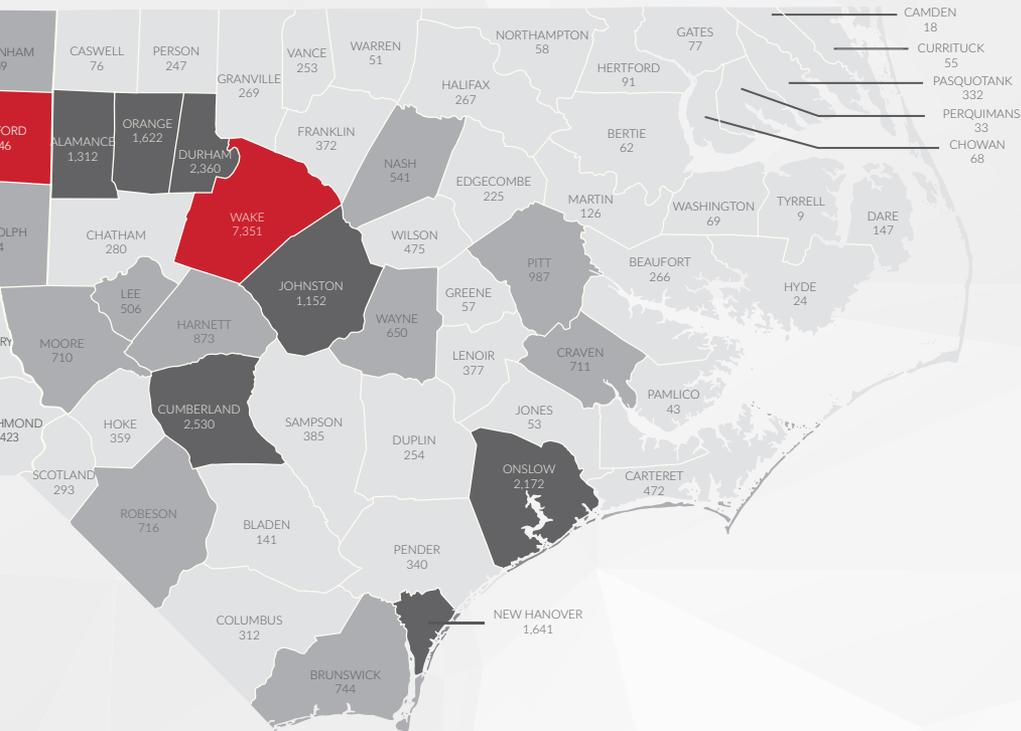
● Parent	40.71%
● Self	20.72%
○ RN/MD/RPh	20.87%
● Other Relative	7.48%
● Other Healthcare Provider	5.40%
● Other	4.82%

# Case Volume by County

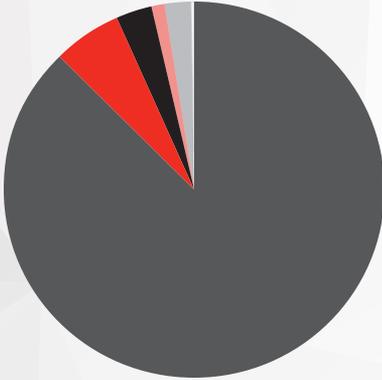


- < 500 cases
- 500 - 999 cases
- 1,000 - 2,999 cases
- ≥ 3,000 cases

21 cases came from an unknown county.



# Case Types



● Human Exposures	87.66%
● Drug ID/Information	4.62%
● Animal Exposures	3.37%
● Poison Information	1.52%
● Other	2.59%
○ Confirmed Non-Exposures	0.24%

# Management Site



## Where was the care provided?

● Onsite (Non-Healthcare Facility)	71.43%
● Managed at Healthcare Facility	26.94%
● Refused Referral to Healthcare Facility	1.17%
○ Other	0.20%
● Unknown	0.25%

# Online Interactions

## 834

Live chats taken



## 7,418

**webPOISONCONTROL® cases taken\***

webPOISONCONTROL® is an online triage tool to help people manage suspected or actual poisonings. It is available at [www.webPOISONCONTROL.org](http://www.webPOISONCONTROL.org). The 7,418 cases reported are not included in the overall NC Poison Control case volume.

## Top 10 Substances People Contacted NC Poison Control About

**Analgesics** ..... 10,406  
(over-the-counter and prescription pain relievers)

**Household cleaning products** ..... 7,544

**Cosmetics/personal care products** ..... 5,349

**Cardiovascular drugs** ..... 5,216  
(heart and blood pressure medications)

**Antidepressants** ..... 5,019

**Sedatives/hypnotics/antipsychotics** ..... 4,971  
(including anxiety medications and sleep aids)

**Antihistamines** ..... 4,399

**Pesticides** ..... 3,848

**Foreign objects** ..... 3,002  
(including silica gel packs, glow sticks, toys, batteries and coins)

**Alcohols** ..... 2,618

# NC Poison Control Spotlight

## **Answering the Call for COVID-19**

In 2020, NC Poison Control answered the state's COVID-19 Helpline, fielding an additional 22,736 cases. Callers had questions about disease treatment and prevention, safe cleaning protocols, access to local testing, and quarantining and isolation procedures. NC Poison Control provided timely, accurate advice about navigating and responding to the pandemic.

NC Poison Control worked with state epidemiologists and other government officials to surveil statewide cases and widen the community's understanding of COVID-19.

Because NC Poison Control is a credible, established, round-the-clock hub of medical professionals, the state Division of Public Health and other state governmental agencies rely on NC Poison Control to provide help in times of both crisis and stability.

# Top 5 Education Items Distributed



Program the  
Number Sticker  
7,015



Poison Help  
Magnet  
2,390



Mini Magnet  
1,948



Poison Safety  
Brochure  
1,865



Poison Help Pens  
1,575



CALL  
1-800-222-1222



CHAT  
NCPoisonControl.org



ONLINE  
webPOISONCONTROL.org

Get poison prevention tips by visiting  
[www.NCPoisonControl.org](http://www.NCPoisonControl.org).

