



American College of
Emergency Physicians®

ADVANCING EMERGENCY CARE 

POLICY STATEMENT

Approved April 2016

Role of Poison Centers in Emergency Health Care, Preparedness, and Response

Reaffirmed by the ACEP
Board of Directors April 2016

Revised and approved by the
ACEP Board of Directors
titled “Role of Poison Centers
in Emergency Health Care,
Preparedness, and Response”
September 2010

Reaffirmed by the ACEP
Board of Directors
October 2006

Revised and approved by the
ACEP Board of Directors
March 2000

Originally approved by the
ACEP Board of Directors
titled, “Poison Information
and Treatment Systems”
September 1995

The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) strongly supports the availability of high-quality, fully funded, certified poison centers to provide:

- Triage and management of poisoning calls from the public, saving medical expenditures for unnecessary health care visits while referring patients appropriately when medical evaluation is needed, as well as mitigating overcrowding of emergency departments.
- Consultation to physicians and other health care providers in the diagnosis and management of poisoning cases.
- Preparedness and response services to emergency responders, health care providers, public health officials, and the public during pandemics, public health emergencies and other hazards events, including chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear incidents.
- Data surveillance to detect and monitor disease outbreaks and epidemiological trends.

ACEP supports the availability of evidence-based poison center triage/management services and prevention policies through legislative and regulatory advocacy at the local, state and national levels.

Emergency physicians have a unique opportunity and responsibility to work with stakeholders to reduce the prevalence and impact of poisonings through advocacy, education and research initiatives.