

Public health experts urge storing medications 'up, away, and out of sight'

WXXI News | By [Jeremy Moule](#)

Published March 17, 2026 at 9:00 AM EDT



It's National Poison Prevention Week and local public health officials are using it in part to discuss the importance of safely storing medication.

During a news conference Monday, Monroe County health commissioner Dr. Marielena Vélez de Brown emphasized that medication exposures are one of the most common calls the [Upstate New York Poison Center](#) hotline fields. The center is based at Upstate University Hospital in Syracuse.

"Young children are naturally curious," Vélez de Brown said. "They learn and they develop by exploring, by touching, by tasting, by feeling and picking up everything, everyday items that we have around the house, including cleaning supplies or medications."

But, Vélez de Brown emphasized, these drug exposure cases can be prevented if parents and caretakers ensure that all medications — prescription and over-the-counter alike — are stored "up, away, and out of sight," and preferably in a locked cabinet, box, or even a safe.

That also includes weed, particularly when it is in the form of a gummy or other edibles, which contain concentrated THC and can be very attractive to children.

"The big emphasis today and always is store medication securely, preventing both theft but also misuse, keeping it out of ... the hands of those for which it is not prescribed, especially our young folks," Faringer said.

She also stressed that households should properly dispose of unused, unwanted medications. The county accepts unwanted medications at its [ecopark](#), and some police stations and pharmacies collect them as well. They can also be deactivated using special bags, such as Detera pouches.