

# The School Nurses' Prescription

News You Can Use from Your Indiana Poison Center

## Top Five Calls From School Nurses in 2013

August  
2014

In 2013, the last year for which complete data was available, Indiana Poison Center (IPC) received 407 calls from school nurses in Indiana. What were these 400+ calls about?

Reviewing our data, the number one subject was the use and accidental misuse of **CNS stimulant drugs**, which are most often prescribed for treatment of ADHD or ADD. Such drugs, including Ritalin (methylphenidate), Concerta (methylphenidate XR), Vyvanse (lisdexamfetamine), Adderall ( and Focalin (dexmethylphenidate), constituted 33 or 8% of calls. We recently addressed CNS stimulant drugs in our newsletter of April 2014, which is available to you on the DOE website, or on our website, [www.indianapoison.org](http://www.indianapoison.org), under School Nurse Newsletters.

The second most frequent cause of calls was the use, misuse, and adverse reactions associated with a class of medications – the **selective serotonin reuptake-inhibitors, the SSRIs** – which received a total of 17 calls. Drugs in this group include Prozac (fluoxetine), Celexa (citalopram), Cymbalta (duloxetine), and Effexor (sertraline). SSRIs are a relatively safe and quite effective group of antidepressants that are approved for use in children and teenagers. Side-effects include sleepiness and GI upset, although citalopram can cause seizures.

Numbers 3 and 4 were a tie. **Hand sanitizers and ibuprofen** got 16 calls each. Hand sanitizers are primarily a concern when they are ingested, and then only if a relatively large amount is eaten. A child that licks a “squirt” amount off of his or her hands is not going to be at risk for any problems, although the awful taste may make them gag or vomit. An older child or teen who deliberately consumes a large amount for the alco-



hol content (remember, they are typically 62% ethanol, so 124 proof!) may develop typical ethanol intoxication symptoms (sleepy, staggering, confused, nausea and vomiting, slurred speech).

Ibuprofen is a very safe medication unless one is allergic to it, has kidney dysfunction, or extremely large amounts are ingested. Adult prescription doses of up to 800 mg TID can be well-tolerated by adult sized students, although it may be wise for them to have a snack and a glass of milk to help prevent GI irritation. Smaller children also have a wide range of safety in their doses. If you give us a call, we can calculate the individual dose / toxic amount for your particular patient.

Number 5 on the list was pens – **ink pens**. Kids like to chew on pens and pens tend to break in their mouths. Although this makes a big mess, it is not a toxic situation. Even though, looking at the student afterwards, you would swear they had spilled at least a pint of ink on themselves, the pens only hold about 1-2 ml of ink. That amount is non-toxic. As long as the child didn't swallow any plastic or metal pieces from the pen itself (which would be a foreign body concern), there is no risk associated with swallowing that amount of ink. Have them wash up and have a drink, and brush their teeth if possible. Their urine and stools may be discolored for a couple of days but that won't harm them – it just looks startling.

### Street Walking

NBOMe, also known as 25i-NBOMe or 25c-NBOMe, is a psychedelic hallucinogen, synthesized from the 2C family of phenylethylamines, that was discovered at the Free University of Berlin in 2003. It was then studied at Purdue University. It first came on the drug scene in the US in 2010.



How can IPC help you? - Call **1-800-222-1222** and find out!

NBOMe is available as a powder or liquid. It lasts 6-10 hours if taken sublingually or buccally and 4-6 hours if taken intranasally. Doses are in the microgram range, with a light dose being 200-600  $\mu\text{g}$ , and

a



strong dose being 700-1500  $\mu\text{g}$ .

When it works as planned, NBOMe causes effects such as a floating feeling, hallucinations, peaceful and loving feelings, synesthesia, visual color shifts and euphoria. When there are adverse effects, those can include agitation, paranoia, hallucinations, dissociation, confusion, increased heart rate, paresthesias, goose bumps, nausea and vomiting, syncope, shaking, dystonias, seizures, and death. Compared to LSD, there are more negative effects and it lasts significantly longer. It is harder to titrate to a “normal” dose because the “suggested” doses are so small. Usage by inhalation is particularly fraught with hazards.

As of May 2013 there had been 5 deaths in the US reportedly related to the use of NBOMe, and 2 deaths have been reported in 2014 in Indiana. There have been multiple deaths in Australia, including some people who, while under its influence, attempted to “fly” and died of traumatic injuries. NBOMe is considered a Schedule I restricted substance under the DEA’s temporary ranking system.

Citations: Wikipedia

**The School Nurses’ Prescription** is an e-newsletter for Indiana school nurses from the Indiana Poison Center. If you have comments, suggestions, or topics you would like to see addressed in future e-newsletters, or if you aren’t on the Indiana School Nurse list-serve and would like to subscribe to this e-newsletter, please contact Gwenn Christianson at [gchristi@clarian.org](mailto:gchristi@clarian.org)