

Out-of-hospital medication errors: a 6-year analysis of the national poison data system.

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<https://psnet.ahrq.gov/issue/out-hospital-medication-errors-6-year-analysis-national-poison-data-system>

Recent studies have documented an increase in [emergency department visits](#) and [deaths](#) due to medication errors in outpatients. Such studies may be limited in their ability to provide a true picture of adverse drug events in the ambulatory setting, as the majority of medication errors are handled by [poison control](#) centers. This analysis of data from the National Poison Data System characterized more than 1 million out-of-hospital medication errors and found that only 7.5% required referral to a physician. Most errors involved nonprescription medications such as cough and cold medications, and [dosing errors](#) were frequently reported (similar to a [prior study](#) in a pediatric population). Reducing outpatient medication errors will require new approaches to [patient education](#), especially in populations with low [health literacy](#).