

## Message from the Director

Welcome to the new website for the Southeast Texas Poison Center. This site was designed to increase awareness of unintentional poisoning and provide information on the services provided by the Southeast Texas Poison Center. We wish to express our great appreciation to the staff of the Poison Center Technical Assistance Resource Center (PC TARC) at the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation for their assistance in developing our splendid new website.

Please remember that this website and the information it contains are only to be used as a resource. **If you are accessing this site because you have a poison emergency, please stop reading and immediately call the poison center at 800-222-1222 for assistance any time of day from a poison expert.**

Poisoning is a public health problem-unintentional poisoning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury death in Texas and nationwide. Poison centers are our nation's primary defense against injury and deaths from poisoning. The Southeast Texas Poison Center is a 24-hour poison emergency treatment and information resource for health care professionals and the public in 28 designated counties of southeast Texas. Located on the campus of the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, it is certified by the American Association of Poison Control Centers as a regional poison center, and is one of six poison centers comprising the Texas Poison Center Network.

Two to three million poisonings are reported to poison centers each year, over half of which involve children under the age of six years. Poison centers like ours provide on-site treatment advice over the phone by for more than 70 percent of poison exposures, reducing emergency room visits, ambulance use and hospital admissions. Poison centers reduce deaths, illness severity, health care costs and length of hospital stays. According to the Institute of Medicine, every dollar spent on poison center services saves seven dollars in unnecessary medical spending.

Enjoy the website: utilize the vital poison awareness information, and practice the poison prevention safety advice it contains. Our website is dynamic, so check back for new and updated information. Remember, anyone can call the poison center anytime with a question about poison at **800-222-1222**.

Thank you.

Jon Thompson, MS, DABAT  
Director