

When Tedd Merrill was 22 months old, he accidentally swallowed several iron pills.

His grandmother, Sharon McColligan of Plattsmouth, Neb., called the Nebraska Regional Poison Center and was advised that Tedd should be immediately taken to the nearest hospital.

His blood iron level was considered to be lethal, and he could have died. The toddler spent about four months at Children's Hospital receiving treatment.

Merrill is now a healthy 16-year-old who attends Lourdes Central Catholic High School in Nebraska City.

He and his family thanked the poison center Monday at a press conference celebrating the center's 50th anniversary.

"We're thankful we still have him," McColligan said. "He's a normal teenager."

Omaha Mayor Mike Fahey and Rep. Lee Terry were also on hand at the Nebraska Medical Center to congratulate the poison center.

The center was established in 1957 under the leadership of Drs. Matilda McIntire and Carol Angle.

Sponsored by the Nebraska Medical Center, Creighton University Medical Center and the University of Nebraska Medical Center, the poison center staffs a nationally certified group of 15 registered nurses and three medical toxicologists.

The Nebraska Regional Poison Center averages about 38,000 calls a year from health care professionals and the public throughout Nebraska,

Wyoming, American Samoa and the Federated States of Micronesia.

To reach the Nebraska Regional Poison Center , call 800-222-1222.

