

Poison Prevention Antidote

April-June 2024 Volume 3 Issue 2



Dangerous Plants

By: Joshua Pelot, Student Pharmacist, University of Minnesota, College of Pharmacy

As spring comes and the weather warms, more people will be outside enjoying the nice weather. While several plants may look beautiful, not all plants are safe.

Some plants may contain toxins that are harmful if consumed (Grecian Foxglove, Lily of the Valley, Poison Hemlock) while others will cause skin irritation if touched (Wild Parsnip, Poison Ivy). For many plants, burning them can release these toxins into the air.

Many dangerous plants may look similar to non-toxic plants and appear almost identical (Wild Parsnip and Golden Alexanders). Some of these plants have delicious looking berries (Buckthorn, Nightshade and Lily of the Valley) that may appear attractive to children and adults. All parts of a plant may be toxic including the leaves and stem.

As more invasive species make their way into Minnesota, there are more potentially dangerous plants that you may not recognize.

How to Prevent a Plant Poisoning:

- Do **not** assume a plant is not poisonous because birds or wildlife eat it.
- Do **not** rely on cooking to destroy toxic chemicals in plants.
- **Never** use anything prepared from nature as “tea” or medicine.
- Teach children not to touch or eat plants in your house or yard.

What to do if exposed to a potentially dangerous plant:

Mouth:

- Remove any remaining portion of the plant or berry.
- Gently wipe with a wet cloth.
- Check for any irritation, swelling or discoloration.
- Give one glass of water to drink, so long as they're conscious and able to swallow.

Skin:

A few plants can cause itching and/or rash to the skin. Remove contaminated clothing and wash skin well with soap and water.

Eyes:

- Wash hands with soap and water.
- Rinse your eyes well with lukewarm tap water for 10-15 minutes.
- Gently pour water from a clean container held 2-4 inches above the eye.

It's important to call the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 for further advice.



Upcoming Events

- 4/13: Students with Stethoscopes
- 4/20: Hmong Health Fair and Expectant Parent event
- 4/27: Healthy Childhood event



Have you heard?

- Plants are a common cause of poisoning.
- Both indoor and outdoor plants can be poisonous.
- Plants, flowers, and mushrooms are often beautiful to look at but many are poisonous. In some cases only part of a plant or flower is poisonous.

A list of common poisonous plants can be found at <https://mnpoison.org/prevention/common-poison-info/poisonous-plants/>

Follow us!  [Facebook.com/MNpoisoncenter](https://www.facebook.com/MNpoisoncenter)  [@MNpoisoncenter](https://twitter.com/MNpoisoncenter)  [mnpoison.org](https://www.mnpoison.org)  [mnpoisoncenter](https://www.instagram.com/mnpoisoncenter)

1-800-222-1222 FOR EMERGENCIES OR QUESTIONS