



# Poisonous House Plants

## Poison in Plants





- There are chemicals in certain plants that act as the plant's defense against insect and animal attacks. The chemicals can be in any part of the plant, and some of these chemicals are toxic to humans and animals if ingested or touched.
- Ingestion of household plants by children under age five is the leading cause of inquiries to poison control centers nationwide. The best treatment for poisoning is to prevent it from ever happening.

## Prevent Poisoning

- ✓ **Educate** yourself on poisonous plants. Know if the plants you have in your home are poisonous.
- ✓ **Keep all plants out of reach** of children and pets. It only takes a second for children or pets to ingest something they find.
- ✓ If you have children or pets, the best way to prevent poisoning is to **completely avoid growing poisonous plants** in the house.
- ✓ **Teach children** not to taste or play with indoor and outdoor plants. This can prevent poisoning at home, outdoors, and at others' houses.
- ✓ **Know your local poison control center number.** Call them as soon as possible if a plant has been ingested.

Below is a chart of some common poisonous house plants. Become familiar with these and see if you have them in your home. If you do, follow the steps to prevent poisoning.

# Common Poisonous House Plants

Common Name	Scientific Name	Toxic Parts	Symptoms Produced
Flamingo Flower 	<i>Anthurium</i>	All plant parts contain calcium oxalate	Intense irritation of the mucous membranes produces swelling of the tongue, lips and palate.
Caladium 	<i>Caladium</i>	All plant parts contain calcium oxalate	Intense irritation of the mucous membranes produces swelling of the tongue, lips and palate.
Clivia 	<i>Clivia</i>	All plant parts contain lycorine	Ingestion produces nausea and diarrhea
Dumb Cane 	<i>Dieffenbachia</i>	All plant parts contain calcium oxalate	Intense irritation of the mucous membranes produces swelling of the tongue, lips and palate.

Devil's Ivy



*Epipremnum*  
*syn.Scindapsus*

All plant parts  
contain calcium  
oxalate

Intense irritation  
of the mucous  
membranes  
produces  
swelling of the  
tongue, lips and  
palate.

Poinsettia



*Euphorbia*  
*pulcherrima*

Milky latex sap  
contains terpenes  
and diterpenes

Latex causes  
nausea,  
diarrhea,  
vomiting and  
irritation if  
swallowed. Skin  
contact results  
in severe  
dermatological  
irritation.

Ivy



*Hedera*

leaves and berries  
contain hederin, a  
saponin

Ingestion  
produces  
burning  
sensation in  
throat and  
gastroenteritis.





Amaryllis



*Hippeastrum*

bulbs contain  
licorine

Ingestion  
causes nausea  
and diarrhea

<p>Myrtle</p> 	<p><i>Myrtus communis</i></p>	<p>All plant parts contain tannin and volatile oils</p>	<p>Ingestion causes nausea and vomiting</p>
<p>Swiss Cheese Plant</p> 	<p><i>Monstera</i></p>	<p>Leaves contain calcium oxalate</p>	<p>Intense irritation of the mucous membranes produces swelling of the tongue, lips and palate.</p>
<p>Oleander</p> 	<p><i>Nerium oleander</i></p>	<p>All plant parts contain glycosides</p>	<p>One leaf is fatal and will disrupt heart function, trigger circulatory failure and lead to death.</p>
<p>Oxalis (can have different colored leaves and flowers)</p> 	<p><i>Oxalis</i></p>	<p>All plant parts contain oxalic acid</p>	<p>Ingestion causes nausea and vomiting and kidney inflammation.</p>

Heart-Leaf Philodendron



*Philodendron scandens*

All plant parts contain calcium oxalate

Intense irritation of the mucous membranes produces swelling of the tongue, lips and palate.

Aralia



*Polyscias*

All plant parts contain saponins

Ingestion causes gastrointestinal irritation, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Australian Umbrella Tree



*Schefflera* syn. *Brassaia*

All plant parts contain oxalic acid and saponins

Ingestion causes vomiting, loss of coordination, and other symptoms.

Jerusalem Cherry



*Solanum  
pseudocapsicum*

Fruit contains  
solanine, a highly  
toxic glyco-alkaloid

Ingestion  
causes burning  
sensation in  
mouth and  
throat, followed  
by gastric  
irritation, fever  
and diarrhea.

Peace Lily



*Spathiphyllum*

All plant parts  
contain calcium  
oxalate

Intense irritation  
of the mucous  
membranes  
produces  
swelling of the  
tongue, lips and  
palate.

Arrowhead Vine



*Syngonium*

All plant parts  
contain calcium  
oxalate

Intense irritation  
of the mucous  
membranes  
produces  
swelling of the  
tongue, lips and  
palate.