

Poisonous Houseplants

Alocasia species

Common names: Elephant's Ear, Cabeza de Burro, Malanga de Jardín, Taro

Description: Erect perennial with long stemmed, spearhead-shaped leaves. Flowers appear on a greenish stem.

Toxic part: The leaves and stems are injurious.

Symptoms: Chewing of plant part causes a painful burning sensation of the lips, mouth, tongue, and throat.

Angel Wings (see *Caladium bicolor*)

Common names: *Caladium*, Angel Wings, Heart of Jesus

Description: Showy, variegated, heart-shaped leaves. Color may vary from white to orange or red depending on species.

Toxic part: The whole plant is injurious when ingested.

Symptoms: Intense irritation of the lips, mouth and throat.

Calla Lily (see *Zantedeschia aethiopica*)

Candelabra Cactus (see *Euphorbia lacteal*)

Dieffenbachia species

Common names: Dumbcane, Dumb Plant

Description: Tall, erect plants with large oblong leaves splotched with ivory markings

Toxic part: Leaf

Symptoms: Chewing on the leaf produces immediate intense pain followed by swelling of the mouth

Elephant Ear (see *Alocasia* species)

Epipremnum aureum

Common names: Pothos, Devils' Ivy

Toxic part: The whole plant is injurious

Symptoms: Causes diarrhea upon ingestion. Also causes dermatitis when touched. Causes a burning sensation in the mouth when eaten.

Euphorbia species:

E. lacteal

Common names: Candelabra Cactus

Description: Many-branched succulent, spiny shrub or tree with milky sap and wing-like spiny ridges.

Toxic Parts: Leaves, stems and milky sap

Symptoms: When ingested, causes severe irritation of the mouth, throat and skin; temporary blindness; vomiting; diarrhea; and stomach pain.

E. marginata

Common names: Snow-on-the-Mountain

Description: Tall annual herb with milky juice, growing up to three feet in height. Leaves are lance-shaped and smooth, bordered by conspicuous white margins. Flowers are bordered with whorl of white

petal-like leaves. Fruit is three-celled, three-lobed capsule.

Toxic Parts: Leaves, stems, and milky sap

Symptoms: When touched, causes blistering of the skin. When ingested causes severe irritation of the mouth, throat, and stomach; nausea; abdominal pain; fainting; and diarrhea

E. pulcherrima:

Common names: Poinsettia, Christmas Flower

Description: Large green stem leaves and smaller but showy red, pink or yellow leaves surrounding the flowers. Fruit is a three-celled, three-lobed capsule.

Toxic Parts: Leaves, stem, and milky sap

Symptoms: When touched, causes irritant dermatitis. If ingested, may cause gastritis.

Jerusalem Cherry (see *Solanum pseudocapsicum*)

Poinsettia (see *Euphorbia pulcherrima*)

Philodendron species

Common names: Philodendron

Description: Climbing vines with aerial roots. Leaves are large and variable, the most common being heart-shaped.

Toxic part: Leaves

Symptoms: When ingested causes painful burning of the lips, mouth, tongue, and throat. Contact dermatitis is common.

Solanum pseudocapsicum

Common Names: Jerusalem Cherry, Coral

Description: Mostly herbs or shrubs. Are often spiny, hairy or have stinging hairs. Berries are black, orange, yellow or red.

Toxic Part: entire plant, especially the berries:

Symptoms: When ingested, causes gastric irritation, scratchy feeling in the throat, fever and diarrhea.

Zantedeschia aethiopica

Common names: Calla, Calla Lily, Lirio Cala

Description: Smooth-edged arrowhead-shaped leaves which grow on long stalks. Flower may be white or green.

Toxic part: Leaves are injurious.

Symptoms: When ingested, causes intense burning of the lips and mouth. Also a direct skin irritant.

Poisonous Plants

Genus and Species	Common Name	Poisonous Portion	
<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Red Maple	Leaves	2
<i>Buxus microphylla</i>	Korean Boxwood	Leaves	2
<i>Buxus sempervirens</i>	Common Boxwood	Leaves	2
<i>Juniperus</i> spp.		Foliage	2
<i>Malus</i> spp.	Apples	Seeds	2*
<i>Quercus</i> spp.	Oak	Buds, leaves, acorns	2+
<i>Taxus</i> spp.	Yew	Foliage, bark, berries	1, 2
<i>Ilex</i> spp.	Hollies	Berries	1*/+
<i>Fagus sylvaticus</i>	Beech	Nut	1, 2
<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>	Cherry Laurel	All parts	2
<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>	Ponderosa Pine	Needles, buds	2
<i>Ligustrum</i> spp.	Privet	Berries, leaves	1, 2**
<i>Hedera helix</i>	English Ivy	Berries, leaves	1
<i>Euonymus atropurpureus</i>		Leaves, bark, fruit	1, 2**
<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>			
<i>Robinia pseudoacacis</i>	Black Locust	Bark, leaves, pods	1, 2
<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	American Elder	Roots, leaves, young bark	1, 2
<i>Betula</i> spp.	Birch	Leaves	2
<i>Gymnocladus dioica</i>	Kentucky Coffee Tree	Leaves, seeds	
<i>Parthenocissis quinquefolia</i>	Virginia Creeper	Berries	1**
<i>Rhododendron</i> spp.		Leaves	2

Toxic to:

(1) Man

(2) Animals or livestock

* Poisoning caused after fruit falls to ground

** Attractive to children

+ The Poisoning Hollies are *opaca*, *aquifolium*, and *verticillata*.

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