



**Maryland Poison Center**  
 University of Maryland School of Pharmacy  
**1-800-222-1222**

**Poison**

# Prevention Press

May 2008

Volume 1, Issue 3

## Common Outdoor Poisonous Plants

### Get your own poisonous plant list

The Maryland Poison Center has a list of common poisonous and non-poisonous plants in our "What you need to know" brochure. Request a brochure by calling 410-706-8122 or by visiting our website: [www.mdpoison.com](http://www.mdpoison.com) and requesting a Mr. Yuk Packet on our homepage.

### Did you know that...

- The Maryland Poison Center managed 773 plant exposures in 2007?
- Plants were the 9th most common exposure reported in children under the age of 6 years in 2007?

Summer is here and plants are in full bloom. From walks through the park to gardening, people are exposed to plants frequently during this season. With the variety of plants that are out there, it is good to know which plants are safe and which ones should be avoided.



It may be surprising to know that some common flowering plants like chrysanthemums, daffodils, and wisterias can be toxic to humans. The leaves and stalks of chrysanthemums are poisonous. They can cause dermatitis (skin rash) upon contact therefore caution should be used when handling this plant. Daffodils and wisteria seeds can be poisonous if eaten. This usually occurs when children eat plants parts, causing them to have nausea, vomiting, or stomach pain. Even the water in a vase holding cut daffodils can cause stomach symptoms if ingested.

There are poisonous shrubs and trees that can be found naturally in Maryland, including holly, yew, and mountain laurels. Holly and yew contain colorful berries that children may try to eat. Ingesting the berries may cause vomiting, diarrhea, dehydration, and drowsiness so it is best to watch children closely when they are around these plants. Children can also be attracted to mountain laurel because of their flowers. Any part of the plant that is ingested can cause symptoms including burning in the mouth, nausea, vomiting, low blood pressure, and dizziness.

There are some weeds that can be poisonous like jimson weed and pokeweed. Pokeweed is found in rich pasture lands, open wooded areas, and many other places. Pokeweed contains purple berries that children are drawn to and may try to eat. Once consumed, a person may experience vomiting, diarrhea, and headaches. A child that has consumed pokeweed berries will likely have purple stains on their hands or face. Jimson weed is often appealing to teenagers. All parts of the plant are toxic and can cause dry mouth, dilated pupils, rapid heart rates and hallucinations. Teenagers may intentionally chew up the seeds or make a tea from the seeds to experience the hallucinogenic effects of this plant.



Lily of the valley, foxglove, and oleander are common plants that contain toxins that can have effects on the heart. These plants are poisonous upon ingestion and can cause a person to experience diarrhea, drowsiness, excessive vomiting, low blood pressure, and changes in heart rhythm.

The plants mentioned here are just a short list of plants that can be poisonous. Caution should always be used when working with plants or when children are around plants. If a plant poisoning is suspected, call the Maryland Poison Center immediately.