



Keeping Your Pets Safe in the Garden

Prepared by Gary Lewis of Phoenix Perennials for CTV Morning Live

We love our gardens and we love our pets but sometimes the two do not mix. There are many common garden plants that are potentially poisonous to cats and dogs. Luckily most pets don't show much interest in the plants around them. Also, many poisonous plants are unpalatable or taste bad so your pets will often make their own decisions not to eat them. Though there is not much data on the quantities of each plant that would need to be consumed to have a negative impact on your pet, in many cases much more than a nibble would be required.



Photo: MuddyLove.com Pet Photography

As a pet owner you don't need to remove all of these plants from your garden or stay away from parks that contain them. These plants are everywhere. It is important to be aware that some plants can be harmful. Being aware of these potential botanical hazards is just another part of responsible pet ownership.

The main symptoms of poisoning in pets are vomiting, oral irritation, diarrhea, drooling, increased heart rate, difficulty breathing, weakness, twitching, tremors, seizures, convulsions, muscle rigidity, incoordination, depression, coma, and death. If your pets show any of these symptoms after ingesting an unknown plant, contact your veterinarian. Get a sample and photograph of the plant for identification.

Tips for Protecting your Pets

- Don't allow your pets to eat or chew on plants that you don't know.
- Teach pets to stay away from potentially harmful plants if they show interest.
- Pay particular attention to inquisitive puppies who like to chew things.
- Put poisonous plants where pets can't reach them.
- Use alternatives that are non-toxic.
- Provide adequate entertainment so that your pets don't get bored. Toys, bones, walks, and playing with your dogs and cats will help them lead fulfilled lives without feeling the need to get into trouble.
- Provide alternative plants for animals to eat and play with such as catnip and catmint for cats or access to grass for dogs.

A List of Plants Potentially Poisonous to Pets

All of the plants listed here have the potential to cause negative effects to your pets if ingested. Keep in mind that some plants might cause mild reactions while others might be more serious due to varying factors: the relative toxicity of the molecules in the plant species, the part of the plant consumed, and the quantity consumed. Some of these plants might have no effect on your pet at all or just cause mild irritation of their mouth or skin while others could lead to more serious physical effects.

<i>Achillea</i> – Yarrow	<i>Humulus lupulus</i> – Hops (dogs only)
<i>Aconitum</i> – Monkshood	<i>Hyacinthus</i> – Hyacinth
<i>Allium</i> – Garlic, Onions, Chives (cats)	<i>Hydrangea arborescens</i> – Smooth Hydrangea
<i>Alocasia</i> – Elephant Ear	<i>Ilex</i> – Holly
<i>Arisaema</i> – Cobra Lily, Jack-in-the-Pulpit	<i>Ipomoea</i> – Morning Glory
<i>Azalea</i> – Azalea (Unpalatable but a few leaves can be serious.)	<i>Iris</i> – Iris
<i>Brugmansia</i> – Angel’s Trumpet	<i>Lathyrus latifolius</i> – Perennial Sweet Pea
<i>Cannabis sativa</i> – Marijuana	<i>Lilium</i> – Asiatic Lily (cats only)
<i>Chrysanthemum</i> – Chrysanthemum	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i> – Cardinal Flower
<i>Citrus</i> – Citrus	<i>Lupinus</i> – Lupin
<i>Clematis</i> – Clematis	<i>Malus</i> – Apple (seeds)
<i>Colchicum</i> – Autumn Crocus	<i>Nandina domestica</i> – Nandina, Heavenly Bamboo
<i>Convallaria majalis</i> – Lily-of-the-Valley	<i>Narcissus</i> – Daffodils (bulbs)
<i>Crocus</i> – Crocus	<i>Paeonia</i> – Peony
<i>Cyclamen</i> – Cyclamen (rhizome)	<i>Pelargonium</i> – Annual Geranium
<i>Dahlia</i> – Dahlia (mild)	<i>Pieris japonica</i> – Lily-of-the-Valley Bush
<i>Daphne</i> – Daphne	<i>Primula</i> – Primrose (mild)
<i>Delphinium</i> – Larkspur	<i>Rheum rhabarbarum</i> – Rhubarb
<i>Dianthus</i> – Carnation, Pinks (mild)	<i>Rhododendron</i> – Rhododendron (Unpalatable but a few leaves can be serious.)
<i>Dicentra</i> – Bleeding Heart	<i>Ricinus communis</i> – Castor Bean
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i> – Foxglove	<i>Solanum</i> spp. – Tomato, Potato
<i>Eucalyptus</i> – Eucalyptus	<i>Taxus</i> – Yew
<i>Gardenia</i> – Gardenia	<i>Tulipa</i> – Tulips (bulbs)
<i>Gladiolus</i> – Gladiola	<i>Zantedeschia</i> – Calla Lily
<i>Hedera helix</i> – Ivy	
<i>Helleborus</i> – Christmas/Lenten Rose	
<i>Hemerocallis</i> – Daylilies (cats only)	
<i>Hibiscus syriacus</i> – Rose-of-Sharon	
<i>Hosta</i> – Plantain Lily	

Selected Sources:

American SPCA, <http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control>

Grower Direct, <http://www.growerdirect.com/flowers-and-pets>

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