

Guide to toxic plants

Many pet owners have come home to find that their carefully nurtured indoor and outdoor gardens have been damaged by their dogs' and cats' curiosity and explorative behaviour. Puppies and kittens love to play with the sticks and leaves of plants, chewing and shredding them all over the garden or the kitchen floor. Older dogs and cats have also been known to dig up newly planted or potted plants and chewing the plastic pot or even the plant's root system. These behaviours annoy and frustrate pet owners, but what effects are the plants having on our animals?

Many people are not aware of how toxic many indoor and outdoor plants, and also cut flower arrangements can be to our beloved pets.

Below are some of the plants and foods that should be kept out of reach from our furry friends as they can present a risk to our animals, causing a range of symptoms from skin irritations to death:

- Aloe vera - vomiting, diarrhoea, tremors
- Angels Trumpet - all parts of plant are toxic, especially the seeds
- Asparagus Fern - Symptoms range due to a wide variety of toxins
- Azalea - Paralysis of the muscles, depression of the nervous system
- Baby's breath - vomiting, diarrhoea
- Begonia - intense burning and irritation of mouth
- Bulbs (e.g. Daffodils, jonquils, tulips, Spider lilies and Crocus) - oral irritation, upset stomach, kidney failure, hyperactivity, lethargy, shock
- Buttercup (Ranunculus) - Stomach irritation, diarrhoea and convulsions
- Carnations - mild gastrointestinal signs, mild skin irritations
- Chrysanthemum - rash after contact
- Cycads - Leaves and nuts are highly toxic when eaten. Symptoms can be irregular stiffness when walking, liver and tissue damage, and paralysis
- Cyclamen - vomiting
- Daffodil - vomiting, diarrhoea
- Dumbcane and Elephant's Ear - Upset stomach, oral irritation, asphyxiation, tremors, seizures, difficulty balancing



Aloe vera



Cyclamen



Dumbcane or Elephants ear



Azalea

- Gladiola - salivation, lethargy
- Ivy - Symptoms range due to a wide variety of toxins
- Lantana (berries) - Gastro-intestinal irritation, muscular weakness and slow circulation.
- Lilies - all parts are quite toxic to cats if eaten. Causes inflammation of the stomach, progresses to acute renal failure and may be fatal if left untreated.
- Milkweed - vomiting and weakness leading to kidney and liver failure and death
- Oleander - nausea, depression, bloody diarrhoea, weakened and irregular paralysis
- Paspalum - Seeds are sticky and can cause irritation, hair matting, and dermatitis
- Poinsettia (leaves and stems) - Diarrhoea, abdominal cramping, sap can cause irritation, and blindness if rubbed in eyes.
- Sago Palm/Japanese fern - potentially fatal
- Tomato plant - diarrhoea, weakness, slow heart rate
- Wandering Jew - Dermatitis
- White Cedar (fruit) - contractions, difficulty walking, coma
- Wisteria - Severe vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhoea



Sago palm



Wandering Jew



Milkweed



Oleander



Lily

Please consult your garden nursery, botanical garden, veterinarian, or poisons centre for more information relating to toxic plants in your garden or environment.

If your dog or cat is showing any of the above mentioned symptoms, please consult your veterinarian for further information and/or treatment immediately.