

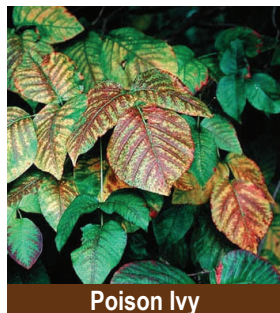
**Information Sheet: PLANTS**



The Blue Ridge Poison Center receives hundreds of calls each year from people concerned about contact with poisonous plants. Curious young children are especially at risk, because they are attracted to the colors and textures of leaves, flowers, and berries. People of any age may mistakenly eat harmful plants or berries which resemble safe, familiar ones. Below is a list of the most common poisonous plants found in Virginia, including a few popular houseplants:

**MAY BE HARMFUL IF SWALLOWED**

- |                    |                               |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Angel trumpet      | <i>Datura suaveolens</i>      |
| Azalea             | <i>Rhododendron spp.</i>      |
| Castor bean        | <i>Ricinus communis</i>       |
| Deadly nightshade  | <i>Atropa bella-donna</i>     |
| Dumb cane          | <i>Dieffenbachia spp.</i>     |
| Foxglove           | <i>Digitalis purpurea</i>     |
| Hellebore          | <i>Veratrum viride</i>        |
| Jack-in-the-pulpit | <i>Arisaema spp.</i>          |
| Jerusalem cherry   | <i>Solanum pseudocapsicum</i> |
| Jimson weed        | <i>Datura stramonium</i>      |
| Lily of the valley | <i>Convallaria majalis</i>    |
| May apple          | <i>Podophyllum peltatum</i>   |
| Morning glory      | <i>Ipomoea violacea</i>       |
| Mountain laurel    | <i>Kalmia latifolia</i>       |
| Oleander           | <i>Nerium oleander</i>        |
| Pokeweed           | <i>Phytolacca americana</i>   |
| Rhododendron       | <i>Rhododendron spp.</i>      |
| Tobacco            | <i>Nicotiana tabacum</i>      |
| Tree tobacco       | <i>Nicotiana glauca</i>       |
| Water hemlock      | <i>Cicuta maculate</i>        |



**MAY CAUSE SKIN OR EYE IRRITATION UPON CONTACT WITH THE PLANT OR SMOKE FROM BURNING PLANTS:**

- |              |                                   |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| Poison ivy   | <i>Toxicodendron radicans</i>     |
| Poison oak   | <i>Toxicodendron diversilobum</i> |
| Poison sumac | <i>Toxicodendron vernix</i>       |

This is not a complete list. Some plants may be poisonous only under specific conditions. For example, steeping a plant in hot water to make an herbal “tea” could concentrate the poisonous ingredients into a harmful amount if swallowed. Some plants are poisonous only in certain parts. For example, it is unsafe to eat the green parts of the potato plant. It could be harmful to swallow any plant if it has been sprayed with certain pesticides or fertilizers.



**If you are concerned about someone who has had any contact with a plant, call the Blue Ridge Poison Center right away for free help and advice: 1-800-222-1222. Don't wait for someone to look or feel sick.**

## SAFETY TIPS

- Keep all houseplants out of the reach of young children. NOTE: Even non-poisonous plants can be a choking hazard for babies and toddlers!
- Store seeds and bulbs out of the sight and reach of young children.
- Don't eat any part of a wild plant or mushroom unless an expert has carefully identified it. When in doubt—throw it out!
- Know what is growing in your house and yard. Bring clippings to a nursery if you need help identifying plants.
- Keep the toll-free poison center number near every phone, and program it into your cell phone, so you can find it quickly in an emergency.



**WHO ANSWERS THE PHONE?** The Blue Ridge Poison Center is staffed by nurses and doctors specially trained to treat all sorts of poisonings: from plants, medicines, household products, pesticides, harmful fumes and gases, and more. The center is open 24 hours a day, every day. *Free and confidential.* 1-800-222-1222.



*Amanita muscaria*

**WHAT ABOUT MUSHROOMS?** A mushroom is not a plant, it is a fungus. However, since they grow outdoors, mushroom poisonings often happen the same way plant poisonings happen. Some mushrooms are very dangerous: only one bite could be harmful enough to cause serious illness or even death. Watch young children closely when outdoors, particularly after a rainfall when mushrooms are plentiful. Only a trained expert can safely identify edible wild mushrooms.