

# Just Sniffing This Poisonous Plant Could Be Deadly to Your Pet

Your pet doesn't even have to ingest it - just drinking the water from the vase or touching their nose to the pollen could be enough to kill them IF it's one of these 12 poisonous plants. If you're not 100% sure you could recognize all 12, take the time now before it's too late.

Analysis by [Dr. Karen Shaw Becker](#)

## STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- Some plants are so toxic to cats and dogs that consuming just a small amount or a few seeds can be deadly
- Castor bean, rosary pea, larkspur, foxglove, sago palm and autumn crocus are examples of common poisonous plants
- Consuming small amounts of any part of a lily plant can lead to death from kidney failure in cats

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Many pets like to nibble on plants. If yours is among them, it's incredibly important to check your home and yard for the presence of poisonous varieties. Many common ornamental houseplants and backyard plants can cause illness in pets, ranging from mild nausea to death.

In fact, of the approximately 150,000 calls to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animal's (ASPCA) Poison Control hotline, about one-quarter of the poisonings related to non-drug products are due to plants.<sup>1</sup>

It's virtually impossible to keep tabs on your pet 24/7, so even if you think he doesn't chew or nibble on plants, there's a chance he may do so when you're not looking. And in some cases, such as lilies and cats, even getting the pollen on their nose or drinking the water in the vase can be deadly.<sup>2</sup>

It's best to err on the side of caution when it comes to your pet's health, so get rid of any potentially poisonous plants before an accident happens.

## 12 Plants That Are Poisonous to Pets

The examples that follow are not an all-inclusive list, but they do represent some of the most common plants that pose a poisoning risk to pets.<sup>3</sup> To see photos and get even more details, see the infographic below.

Symptoms of ingesting a poisonous plant vary but may include vomiting, drooling, diarrhea, loss of appetite, foaming at the mouth, organ failure and more.

1. **Castor Bean** — Also known as castor oil plant, mole bean plant, and African wonder tree, this plant is very toxic to dogs, cats and horses. The beans are especially dangerous because they contain ricin, a toxic

compound that inhibits protein synthesis. The entire plant is poisonous, however.

Consuming as little as 1 ounce of seeds can be deadly. Symptoms may develop 12 to 48 hours after ingestion and include loss of appetite, excessive thirst, weakness, loss of coordination, difficulty breathing and central nervous system depression.

As symptoms progress, bloody diarrhea, convulsions, coma and death may also occur.

2. **Caladium** — Also known as malanga, elephant's ears, stoplight, mother-in-law plant, Texas wonder, angel wings and pink cloud, this plant contains insoluble calcium oxalates that are toxic to dogs and cats.

Symptoms of ingestion include intense burning and irritation of the mouth, excessive drooling, vomiting and difficulty swallowing.

3. **Lilies** — Lilies are highly toxic to cats. This includes many varieties, including day lilies, Easter lilies, tiger lilies, Asiatic lilies and more.

Consuming small amounts of any part of this plant can lead to death from kidney failure in cats. Symptoms include vomiting, loss of appetite, lethargy, diarrhea, depression, kidney failure and death.

4. **Dumb Cane** — Also known as charming dieffenbachia, tropic snow and exotica, this foliage contains insoluble calcium oxalates that are toxic to dogs and cats.

Ingesting this plant leads to intense irritation of the mouth, tongue and lips along with vomiting and difficulty swallowing. Contact with the sap of this plant can also cause irritation and damage to the eyes.

5. **Rosary Pea** — This plant goes by many names, including precatory bean, Buddhist rosary bead, love bean, lucky bean, Indian licorice, prayer bean and weather plant. Toxic compounds called abrin and abric acid in the beans are dangerous to dogs, cats and horses.

Consuming even one rosary pea can be deadly, but fortunately the seed's hard outer coat must be damaged (crushed or cut open) to cause harm. So in many cases ingesting the seeds may lead to only mild illness.

However, if a broken pea is ingested, it can lead to severe vomiting and diarrhea (sometimes bloody), tremors, high heart rate, shock, fever and death.

6. **Larkspur** — Larkspur contains compounds called diterpene alkaloids that are toxic to dogs, cats and horses. It's thought the toxicity of this plant varies depending on the conditions in which it's grown and becomes less toxic as it matures.

If consumed, larkspur can cause neuromuscular paralysis and symptoms such as muscle tremors, stiffness, weakness, convulsions, heart failure and death from respiratory paralysis.

7. **Foxglove** — Foxglove contains cardiac glycosides that are toxic to dogs, cats and horses. Consuming this plant can lead to cardiac arrhythmias, vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, heart failure and death.
8. **Autumn Crocus** — Also known as meadow saffron, autumn crocus contains colchicine and other alkaloids that are toxic to dogs, cats and horses. If your pet consumes it, this may lead to oral irritation, bloody vomiting, diarrhea, shock, organ damage and bone marrow suppression.
9. **Sago Palm** — This popular plant, also known as coontie palm, cardboard palm, cycads and zamias contain toxic cyasin. It's toxic to dogs, cats and horses and may lead to symptoms including vomiting, jaundice,

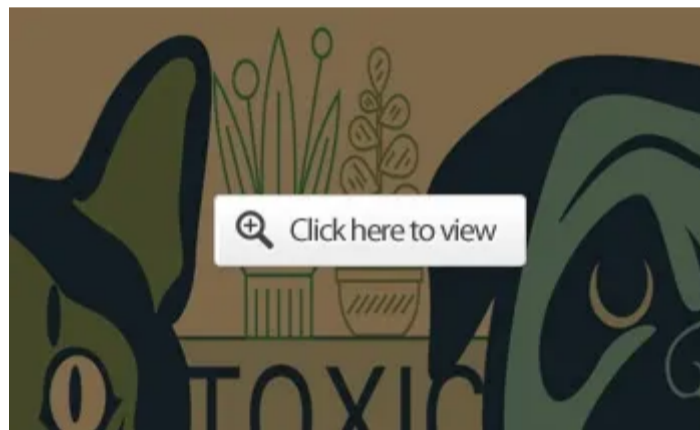
hemorrhagic gastroenteritis, bruising, liver damage, liver failure and death.

10. **Black Locust** — The entire black locust tree, especially the bark and shoots, is toxic to cats and dogs. If consumed, it can cause kidney failure, weakness, nausea, depression and death.
11. **Yew** — Yew, also known as Japanese yew, English yew and European yew, is toxic to dogs, cats and horses due to the taxine it contains. If consumed, this ornamental tree (including its bark, leaves and seeds) can lead to sudden death from heart failure.

Early signs of ingestion include muscular tremors, labored breathing and seizures in dogs. Even playing with the branches or sticks from the yew tree could be potentially deadly to dogs.

12. **Oleander** — Oleander, or rose bay, contains cardiac glycosides that are toxic to dogs, cats and horses. Consume any part of the plant may lead to colic, diarrhea (possibly bloody), sweating, incoordination, difficulty breathing, muscle tremors and possibly death from heart failure.

Your pet may be poisoned from access to pruned or fallen branches while horses may be poisoned by consuming this ornamental plant new horse show arenas.



## Seek Emergency Veterinary Care If Your Pet Eats a Poisonous Plant

If your dog or cat consumes a potentially poisonous plant, get your pet to an emergency veterinary clinic immediately. Prompt treatment may mean the difference between life and death. If you're not sure whether the plant is poisonous, it's best to seek medical attention just in case.

You can also consult the **ASPCA's database of toxic and non-toxic plants**, which you can search to find out if the plant your pet consumed warrants a trip to the emergency vet. In addition, if your pet consumes a potentially toxic plant or any other poisonous substance, call your local veterinarian, emergency veterinary clinic or ASPCA's 24-hour emergency poison hotline at 1-888-426-4435 to find out what next steps to take.

### Sources and References

[Lifehacker December 27, 2015](#)

[ASPCA Animal Poison Control, Toxic and Non-Toxic Plants](#)

<sup>1</sup> [Lifehacker December 27, 2015](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Care.com](#)

<sup>3</sup> [ASPCA Animal Poison Control, Toxic and Non-Toxic Plants](#)