

Common Plant Exposures "The Top 10 Hits of 2003"

The American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC) publishes a list of the most common plant exposures each year. This list was reported to the AAPCC by all poison control centers throughout the United States.

These plants can be found to range from non-toxic to toxic plants. This list represents the frequency of involvement of the plant in a series of reported exposures. You may notice that these common plants may correlate with the list of top sellers at your local plant stores.

These plants may be growing and available through commercial nurseries or found in the wild. Some of the plants may not be natives of the Pacific Northwest. However, if transplanted, they may now thrive in our in our backyards and our homes.

1. Spathiphyllum species
 - Common Name: **Peace lily, spathe flower, white anthurium**
 - Frequency: 3,173
 - Active Toxin(s) (if any): Calcium oxalate raphids (crystals)
 - Symptoms (if any): Symptoms (if any): Burning sensation in lips, mouth, throat, contact dermatitis, risk of swelling in back of mouth and throat, leading to closure of airways and difficulty breathing.

2. Euphorbia pulcherrima
 - Common Name: **Poinsettia**
 - Frequency: 2,541
 - Active Toxin(s) (if any): Unknown, poss. Terpenoids
 - Symptoms (if any): Possible skin rash from contact with plant milky substance (latex), mild nausea and vomiting when large amounts are eaten.

3. Philodendron species
 - Common Name: **Philodendron**
 - Frequency: 2,525
 - Active Toxin(s) (if any): Calcium oxalate raphides (crystals)
 - Symptoms (if any): Burning sensation in lips, mouth, throat, contact dermatitis, risk of swelling in back of mouth and throat, leading to closure of airways and difficulties breathing.

4. Ilex species
 - Common Name: **Holly**
 - Frequency: 2,338
 - Active Toxin(s) (if any): Alkaloids, glycosides, saponins, and terpenoids.
 - Symptoms (if any): Nausea, persistent vomiting and diarrhea.

5. *Phytolacca Americana*
 - Common Name: **Pokeweed, Inkberry**
 - Frequency: 1,931
 - Active Toxin(s) (if any): Terpenoids
 - Symptoms (if any): Nausea, gastroenteric cramps, sweating, vomiting or diarrhea.

 6. *Ficus* species
 - Common Name: **Rubber tree, weeping fig**
 - Frequency: 1,436
 - Active Toxin(s) (if any): Unclear
 - Symptoms (if any): A rash may result when skin comes in contact with oils from the plant.

 7. *Toxicodendron radicans*
 - Common Name: **Poison ivy**
 - Frequency: 1,405
 - Active Toxin(s) (if any): Catechols
 - Symptoms (if any): Allergic contact dermatitis (skin rash).

 8. *Crassula* species
 - Common Name: **Jade plant**
 - Frequency: 1,082
 - Active Toxin(s) (if any): None
 - Symptoms (if any): None noted

 9. *Dieffenbachia* species
 - Common Name: **Dieffenbachia, dumbcane, mother-in-law plant**
 - Frequency: 1,053
 - Active Toxin(s) (if any): Calcium oxalate raphides, proteolytic enzymes
 - Symptoms (if any): Same as philodendron (above), bullae may form, speech may be impaired, superficial necrosis of tissue.

 10. *Epipremnum aureum*
 - Common Name: **Pothos, devil's ivy, Variegated Philodendron**
 - Frequency: 1,083
 - Active Toxin(s) (if any): Calcium oxalate raphides
 - Symptoms (if any): Same as philodendron (above).
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The list of "Top 10 Hits for 2003" is an excerpt of the AAPCC 2004 Annual Report. Please go to the AAPCC web site link below to review the complete report.

AAPCC 2004 Annual Report (pdf):

<http://www.aapcc.org/Annual%20Reports/03report/03Sect.htm>