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## **OREGON POISON CENTER OFFERS TIPS FOR PARENTS FOR A SAFE HOLIDAY SEASON**

**PORTLAND**, Ore. -- For many people, plants are a big part of the holiday season. The Oregon Poison Center at Oregon Health & Science University has some tips for a safe holiday season:

- Poinsettias are not as dangerous as most people believe. The plant's milk can cause skin and stomach irritation. A child would have to eat a large amount of any part of a poinsettia to experience mild symptoms such as skin rash, an upset stomach, and perhaps vomiting.
- Mistletoe and holly berries are very dangerous if eaten. Keep them far away from children. Call the Oregon Poison Center if your child eats any berries.
- Pine needles from evergreens can be very sharp and cause serious irritation to tender mouths or stomachs if eaten.
- Small children can choke on poisonous plants and decorations as well as nonpoisonous plants. Make sure there are no leaves, berries, or other objects in your child's hand or mouth when you find them near a plant.
- It is a good idea to know the names of all plants in and around your house. Unfortunately, the Oregon Poison Center cannot identify plants over the telephone.
- Never make your child vomit before calling the poison center. Vomiting is not necessary most of the time, and can be harmful to the child.
- Pets can also be poisoned by plants. The National Animal Poison Center is available specifically to treat animal poisoning at 1 888 426-4435.

**If you suspect your child has been poisoned call the Oregon Poison Center at OHSU: 1 800 222-1222.**