

10 Plants That Are Poisonous to Pets



I love indoor plants – they make such a great decorating “accessory.” And, judging by the array of indoor plants that one can find in supermarkets these days that reflect seasonal changes, they are indeed a popular color feature in any room.

Fortunately, two of my indoor favorites, namely orchids and African violets, are safe non-toxic plants and available year-round. Lots of other popular plants including some palms and ferns are pet-friendly too.

But its important to know what is safe and what is toxic for both indoor and outdoor areas. The ASPCA’s Animal Poison Control Center receives several hundred calls a year from distressed pet owners whose pets have eaten highly toxic plants, especially lilies. The toxins in poisonous plants have varied effects on cats and dogs, ranging from a [skin rash](#) to vomiting and [diarrhea](#). Nibbling on the wrong plants can even cause convulsions resulting in a coma, kidney failure, and death.

If your pet nibbles on the wrong thing, she is going to need urgent medical attention. Rush her to your veterinarian or nearest pet emergency room, and take a sample of the plant with you, or call the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center at 1-888-426-4435. A fee may be charged to your credit card.

Here is a list of the top ten most poisonous plants to pets:

1. **Lilies:** All lilies are very popular indoor plants, especially around Easter. As

beautiful as they are, they are highly toxic to pets and can cause severe kidney damage.

2. **Sago Palm:** These plants can potentially produce vomiting, diarrhea, depression, seizures, and liver failure. All parts of the plant are poisonous, but the seeds, or “nuts,” contain the largest amount of toxins.
3. **Tulip/Narcissus:** The bulb portions of these plants contain toxins that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation, drooling, loss of appetite, central nervous system depression, convulsions, and cardiac abnormalities.
4. **Azalea/Rhododendron:** This plant contains substances known as grayanotoxins, which can produce vomiting, drooling, diarrhea, weakness, and central nervous system depression in animals. Severe azalea poisoning can ultimately lead to coma and death from the collapse of the cardiovascular system.
5. **Cyclamen:** This plant contains cyclamine; the highest concentration of this toxic component is typically located in the tuber (root) portion of the plant. If consumed, it can produce significant gastrointestinal irritation, including intense vomiting. Fatalities have also been reported in some cases.
6. **Oleander:** All parts of the oleander plant are considered to be toxic because they contain cardiac glycosides that have the potential to cause serious effects. These include gastrointestinal tract irritation, abnormal heart function, a significant drop in body temperature (hypothermia), and even death.
7. **Castor Bean:** The poisonous principle in this plant is ricin, a highly toxic protein that can produce severe abdominal pain, drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, excessive thirst, weakness, and loss of appetite. In severe cases, dehydration, muscle twitching, tremors, seizures, coma, and death can occur.
8. **Kalanchoe:** This plant can cause gastrointestinal irritation and also seriously affect cardiac rhythm and heart rate.
9. **Yew:** This plant contains taxine, which affects the central nervous system, causing trembling, lack of coordination, and breathing difficulties, as well as significant gastrointestinal irritation and cardiac failure, which can result in death.
10. **Marijuana:** Ingesting this plant in any form can result in central nervous system depression, as well as vomiting, diarrhea, vocalization, drooling, increased heart rate, and even seizures or coma.

Print out this list and keep it handy when shopping for both indoor plants and greenery for the garden.