



Which Plants to Choose for the Holidays?

Mistletoe: Interestingly, this plant lives off other trees and shrubs, which makes it a type of parasite. All parts of the mistletoe plant are poisonous. Swallowing 1-2 berries might not be harmful to a child but could be to a pet. Ingestion of berry or leaf can cause an upset stomach, vomiting, and diarrhea. Rash might also result. Larger amounts could cause more serious effects.

Holly: Holly berries are very attractive to children. Containing theobromine, an alkaloid, as few as 2 holly berries can cause nausea, vomiting and diarrhea but more could produce more significant symptoms. Eating holly berries is a serious concern for pets too, as the same alkaloid found in chocolate, highly dangerous to dogs, is also found in holly berries but at a higher concentration. Based on calls to poison centers the berries are the part most commonly eaten but the bark, leaves, and seeds are toxic too. Drowsiness and dehydration can occur if large amounts are swallowed.

Amaryllis: The stately amaryllis plant is a common holiday gift as are the daffodil, and narcissus. Containing toxic alkaloids, eating the bulbs or leaves, though less toxic, can cause stomach pain or cramping, irregular heartbeats, or convulsions. Also be sure not to put these plants within the reach of pets.

Jerusalem cherry: Jerusalem cherry is a species of the nightshade family, which many can identify as a toxic plant. The primary poison is solanine, an alkaloid, which can cause stomach upset and vomiting in people, but generally is

not life-threatening. However, the fruit, which resembles a cherry tomato both in appearance and flavor, is extremely toxic to dogs and cats and even some birds. Kids and pets have been known to eat enough to cause illness, or in the case of pets, ingestion can even lead to death.

Poinsettia: Hard to believe after years of hearing about the toxicity of poinsettias the truth is that generally calls to the Poison Center about poinsettia plant ingestions do not require any treatment management.

Yew: A yew is an evergreen tree or shrub that has needles for leaves and bears colorful red berries. The combination of red berries and green needles make it look perfect for a Christmas plant but using the plant in Christmas decorations is a bad idea. Yews contains chemicals called taxines that quickly cause an irregular heartbeat after being eaten, which can be life-threatening. Yew poisoning can also cause a headache, dizziness, gastrointestinal problems, breathing difficulties, trembling, convulsions, dilated pupils, and a coma.

Interestingly, as is the case for holly berries, some wild animals feed on yew berries without being poisoned.

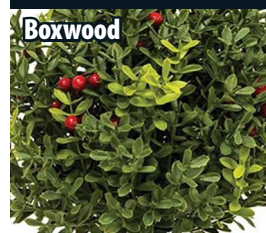
Boxwood: Cyclobuxine is the alkaloid found in all parts of the boxwood, a common green used at the holidays. Minor toxicity may occur if ingested resulting in vomiting or diarrhea. Dermal rash may occur if skin contact is made. Best to keep this greenery up, away and out of reach or better yet, leave it in the garden.

So, before using a plant for decoration or in your gift giving this season, think first before you decide. Consider whether the home has young children and/or pets. If so, perhaps a non-toxic plant might be the best solution. Make it a poison-safe holiday by selecting a non-toxic choice such as Christmas cactus, African violet, Begonia, Jade plant or Coleus. Enjoy a poison-safe holiday season.

Retrieved 11/20/20: https://ucanr.edu/sites/poisonous_safe_plants/Toxic_Plants_by_Scientific_Name_685/, <http://poisonousplants.ansci.cornell.edu/php/plants.php>, <https://dengarden.com/gardening/Christmas-Plants-Safe-and-Poisonous>

Which of these holiday plants are poisonous?

Boxwood



Yew



Mistletoe



Holly



Answer: ALL OF THEM!



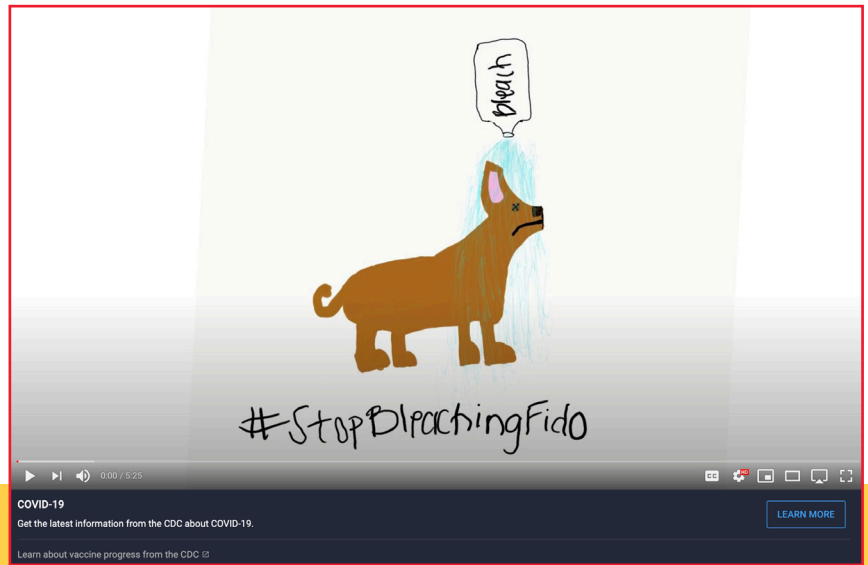
Stop Bleaching Fido

The Pet Poison Helpline has seen more than a 100% increase in calls regarding pets and exposures to household cleaning products due to confusion on how to best safeguard pets during this uncertain time.

View this video to help protect your pets while still being able to keep homes clean and virus free!



[CLICK HERE TO WATCH VIDEO](#)



Pet Poisonings in Covid

With the Coronavirus (COVID-19) everyone seems to be working hard to keep homes and workplaces as clean as possible. As a result, pets may be unintentionally exposed to household cleaning products. While many of these products are not harmful, there are some that may result in serious symptoms. One of the most common injuries is a chemical burn. Most injuries happen when the product comes in contact with the skin, eyes, or is tasted or swallowed. Inhaling fumes or aerosolized sprays of some products can cause problems. The following is a list of common household cleaners and the dangers they may pose to your pet.

Bleach: Even small amounts of regular strength household bleach (like a pet walking through a puddle on the floor) could result in skin irritation and damaged fur. Thorough rinsing is important to remove any bleach in the toe webs or between the foot pads. Dermal exposure often leads to ingestion as animals will attempt to lick off the bleach. Ingestion can lead to vomiting and stomach

irritation which may need veterinary treatment. Any animal with bleach in the eye should be examined by a veterinarian. Immediate flushing may be necessary. Also, mixing chlorine bleach with ammonia can produce a toxic gas which is corrosive to the lungs.

Isopropyl Alcohol: Ingesting isopropyl alcohol, also called rubbing alcohol, can cause poisoning in pets resulting in symptoms such as drunkenness, low blood sugar (especially in small and young pets), stomach upset, slow heart rate, low blood pressure and difficulty breathing. Rubbing alcohol is more toxic to dogs than ethanol, the alcohol found in beer and wine.

Hydrogen Peroxide: Exposure to hydrogen peroxide may result in skin and eye irritation/damage, vomiting or damage to the stomach lining. The common 3% household strength concentration is occasionally used to induce vomiting in dogs but is only safe at correct doses and only in specific cases. Do not give hydrogen peroxide to a dog

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10 Dangerous Food Safety Mistakes

We all want to keep our families safe and healthy. But sometimes a simple mistake in the way we handle and prepare food can lead to serious sickness. With some germs like Salmonella, just a small amount in undercooked food is enough to cause food poisoning. And just a tiny taste of food with botulism toxin can cause paralysis and even death.

You can protect your family by avoiding these common food safety mistakes.



Mistake #1: Not washing your hands

Why It's a Mistake: Germs on your hands can get on food and make it unsafe.



Solution: Wash hands the right way—for 20 seconds with soap and running water. Wash hands before, during, and after preparing food; before eating; and after using the toilet or changing a child's diaper.



Mistake #2: Washing meat, chicken, or turkey

Why It's a Mistake: Washing raw meat, chicken, turkey, or eggs can spread germs to your sink, countertops, and other surfaces in your kitchen. Those germs can get on other foods, like salads or fruit, and make you sick.



Solution: Don't wash meat, chicken, turkey, or eggs. Cooking them thoroughly will kill harmful germs.



Mistake #3: Peeling fruits and vegetables without washing them first

Why It's a Mistake: Fruits and vegetables may have germs on their peeling or skin. It's easy to transfer those germs to the inside of fruits and vegetables when you cut or peel them.



Solution: Wash all fruits and vegetables under running water even if you're going to peel them. Use a clean vegetable brush to scrub firm fruits and vegetables like melons, avocados, and cucumbers.



Mistake #4: Putting cooked meat back on a plate that held raw meat

Why It's a Mistake: Germs from the raw meat can spread to the cooked meat.



Solution: Always use separate plates for raw meat and cooked meat. The same rule applies to chicken, turkey, and seafood.



Mistake #5: Not cooking meat, chicken, turkey, seafood, or eggs thoroughly

Why It's a Mistake: Cooked food is safe only after it's been cooked to a high enough temperature to kill germs.



Solution: Use a food thermometer to make sure you cook food to a safe internal temperature.

- 145°F for whole cuts of beef, pork, veal, and lamb (then allow the meat to rest for 3 minutes before carving or eating)
- 160°F for ground meats, such as beef and pork
- 165°F for all poultry, including ground chicken and turkey
- 165°F for leftovers and casseroles
- 145°F for fresh ham (raw)
- 145°F for seafood, or cook until flesh is opaque.

Get a detailed list external icon of foods and safe temperatures. Also, if you won't be serving hot food right away, keep it hot (at 140°F or above) until serving.



Mistake #6: Eating raw batter or dough, including cookie dough, and other foods with uncooked eggs or uncooked flour

Why It's a Mistake: Flour and uncooked eggs may contain Escherichia coli (E. coli), Salmonella, or other harmful bacteria.



Solution: Cook or bake flour and eggs thoroughly. Don't eat foods that contain raw or undercooked eggs, such as runny eggs, or homemade mayonnaise, hollandaise sauce, and eggnog. Don't eat raw (uncooked) dough or batter that contains either flour or eggs. Keep raw dough away from children, including play dough. Wash hands, work surfaces, and utensils thoroughly after contact with flour and raw dough.



Mistake #7: Thawing or marinating food on the counter

Why It's a Mistake: Harmful germs can multiply very quickly at room temperature.



Solution: Thaw food safely external icon. You can thaw it: In the refrigerator, In cold water, or In the microwave. Always marinate food in the refrigerator no matter what kind of marinade you're using.

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Pet Poisonings in Covid

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without consulting Pet Poison Helpline or a veterinary professional. Never use hydrogen peroxide to induce vomiting in cats as this could lead to fatality. Concentrations greater than 3% can be corrosive to all tissues.

Phenols: Found in everything from toilet bowl cleaners to all-purpose cleaning sprays, these products can be corrosive if they contact the skin and eyes or if they are swallowed. They can also cause corrosive injury to the lungs if inhaled.

How to keep you pet safe when cleaning

It's simple! Keep your pets out of the room when cleaning, especially if using an open bucket. Discard paper towels that are wet with cleaner or sanitizing wipes in covered trash cans. When cleaning the bathroom, keep the doors closed (and windows open!). In case of spills, quickly crate pets or secure the area to avoid accidental exposure.

As with any possible exposure to a cleaning product, contact Pet Poison Helpline or your veterinarian immediately for assistance.

Retrieved 11/17/20: <https://www.petpoisonhelpline.com/>

10 Dangerous Food Safety Mistakes

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Mistake #8: Leaving food out too long before putting it in the fridge

Why It's a Mistake: Harmful germs can grow in perishable foods (including meat, chicken, turkey, seafood, eggs, cut fruit, cooked rice, and leftovers) if you leave them out of the refrigerator 2 hours or longer.



Solution: Put perishable foods in the refrigerator within 2 hours external icon or within 1 hour if the food is exposed to a temperature over 90°F (like in a hot car). Divide roasts and large portions of food, such as pots of stew or chili, into smaller containers so they will chill quickly. It's OK to put warm or hot food into the refrigerator, as long as it's packaged in small enough amounts that will cool quickly.

Retrieved 11/18/20: <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/ten-dangerous-mistakes.html>

ANYONE CAN GET FOOD POISONING



But some people are more likely to get sick because their bodies can't fight germs as well.

People with a higher risk of FOOD POISONING



Adults aged 65 and older



Children younger than 5 years



People with weakened immune systems



Pregnant women

Choose and prepare food carefully to help prevent food poisoning.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/foodsafety

CS291943



ATTENTION:

The Second Annual Health Educator Webinar Series is underway.

If you were not able to attend the first webinar on Covid-related Poisonings please review it at:

<https://www.upstate.edu/poison/community/webinars.php>

The next webinar on **Drugs of Abuse** will be geared for Health Care Professionals. It will be held in January 2021, so be on the lookout!



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