

Table 5.2
Effects of Some Poisonous Plants

Plant	Toxic Part	Effects of Ingestion
Flower garden plants		
Amaryllis <i>Amaryllis</i> (various)	Especially the bulb	Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and diarrhea.
Autumn crocus <i>Colchicum autumnale</i>	All parts, especially corm	Fatal; Common: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, increased heart rate and chest pain. Less common: decreased blood pressure, decreased heart rate, and seizures. Death is from respiratory failure or cardiovascular failure with ingestion of large amounts.
Castor bean* <i>Ricinus communis</i>	Seeds; seeds need to be chewed to release the toxin	Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, bleeding of the gastrointestinal tract, tissue sloughing, liver damage, weak but fast heart rate. Fatal; one or two chewed castor bean seeds can be a lethal dose. (It is strongly recommended that children not have ANY exposure to this plant.)
Daffodil <i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i>	Bulb	Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and diarrhea. Dermatitis may occur. Symptoms usually last only three hours.
Delphinium <i>Delphinium</i> (various)	Newest growth and seeds have the highest toxicity	Burning or tingling sensation in the lips, tongue, mouth; nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, difficulty swallowing or talking.
Foxglove* <i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Leaves, probably all parts	Serious poisoning rarely develops after “taste” ingestions of whole plant material by children. Taste/exploratory ingestions are unlikely to result in toxicity. Ingestion of large amounts first results in nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and cramping with headache, confusion, lethargy, and fatigue. This is followed later by a dangerously irregular heartbeat, slowed heart rate, abnormal heart beats, decreased blood pressure, and death caused by heart failure.
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Hyacinth <i>Hyacinthus orientalis</i>	All parts, especially bulb	Intense nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, and diarrhea. Dermatitis can be seen.
Iris <i>Iris</i> (various)	Underground stems, leaves	Burning and stinging in the mouth and throat, stomach pain, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Dermatitis is also possible. Severity depends on the amount ingested.
Kaffir lily <i>Clivia miniata</i>	Especially the bulb	Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and diarrhea.
Larkspur <i>Delphinium</i> (various)	Newest growth and seeds have the highest toxicity	Burning or tingling sensation in the lips, tongue, mouth; nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, difficulty swallowing or talking.
Lily-of-the-Valley <i>Convallaria majalis</i>	Leaves, flowers	Serious poisoning rarely develops after "taste" ingestions of whole plant material by children. Taste/exploratory ingestions are unlikely to result in toxicity. Ingestion of large amounts first results in nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and cramping with headache, confusion, lethargy, and fatigue. This is followed later by a dangerously irregular heartbeat, slowed heart rate, abnormal heartbeat, decreased blood pressure, and death caused by heart failure.
Monkshood <i>Aconitum</i> (various)	All parts	A tingling or burning sensation in the fingers and toes is usually seen first, followed by sweating and chills, a generalized tingling feeling, numbness, and a feeling of intense cold. This is followed by intense vomiting, diarrhea with abdominal pain, paralysis, abnormal heartbeat, and intense pain. Death is usually from abnormal heartbeats or respiratory paralysis. (It is strongly recommended that children not have ANY exposure to this plant.)

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Morning glory <i>Ipomoea</i> (various)	Seeds	Diarrhea, anxiety, and tension. Morning glory seeds are said to be hallucinogenic; however, large numbers (in the hundreds) are required, and effects cannot be confirmed.
Narcissus <i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i>	Bulb	Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and diarrhea. Dermatitis may occur. Symptoms usually last only three hours.
Oleander* <i>Nerium oleander</i>	All parts, including dried, dead leaves and twigs	Serious poisoning rarely develops after “taste” ingestions of whole plant material by children. Taste/exploratory ingestions are unlikely to result in toxicity. Ingestion of large amounts first results in nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and cramping, with headache, confusion, lethargy, and fatigue. This is followed later by a dangerously irregular heartbeat, slowed heart rate, decreased blood pressure, and death caused by heart failure.
Poinsettia <i>Euphorbia pulcherrima</i>	Leaves, flowers	Ingestion of large amounts may possibly cause vomiting, but usually no ill effects are seen. Considered to be nontoxic.
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Flower garden plants		
Ranunculus <i>Ranunculus</i> (various)	All parts	Bad taste, burning in the mouth and throat, mouth ulcers, vomiting, sometimes vomiting blood, abdominal pain, and diarrhea.
Star-of-Bethlehem <i>Ornithogalum umbellatum</i>	Bulbs, flowers	Serious poisoning rarely develops after “taste” ingestions of whole plant material by children. Ingestion of large amounts first results in nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and cramping with headache, confusion, lethargy, and fatigue. This is followed later by a dangerously irregular heartbeat, slowed heart rate, decreased blood pressure, and death caused by heart failure.
Ornamental plants		
Angel’s trumpet* <i>Brugmansia</i> (various)	All parts	Dilated pupils; blurred vision; dry mouth; dry, red-hot skin; thirst; fever; increased heart rate; increased blood pressure; urinary retention; constipation; and hallucinations.
Arum <i>Arum</i> (various)	All parts	Chewing plant parts results in intense burning; irritation; pain; redness and swelling of the lips, mouth, and tongue; excessive drooling; and vomiting. Chewing the plant causes enough pain and irritation that large quantities usually are not swallowed.

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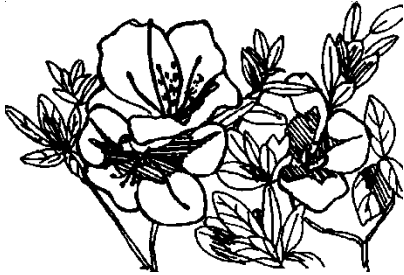
Plant	Toxic Part	Effects of Ingestion
Ornamental plants		
Azalea <i>Rhododendron</i> (various)	All parts, especially the leaves	Burning in the mouth, numbness and tingling around the mouth area, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, sweating, decreased blood pressure, decreased heart rate, confusion, and seizures. Small taste amounts are not expected to be dangerous.
		
Black laurel <i>Leucothoe davisiae</i>	All parts	Fatal; burning sensation of mouth and throat, drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, drowsiness, incoordination, muscle weakness, seizures, decreased heart rate, decreased blood pressure, paralysis, liver failure, coma, and death.
Calla lily <i>Zantedeschia</i> (various)	All parts	Chewing plant parts results in intense burning, irritation, and pain; redness and swelling of the lips, mouth, and tongue; excessive drooling; and vomiting. Chewing the plant causes enough pain and irritation that large quantities usually are not swallowed.
Carolina yellow Jessamine <i>Gelsemium</i> <i>sempervirens</i>	All parts	Headache, dilated pupils, double vision, droopy eyelids, dizziness, dry mouth, sweating, muscular weakness or muscle rigidity, seizures, shortness of breath, difficulty speaking, difficulty swallowing, and decreased heart rate.

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Ornamental plants		
Cotoneaster <i>Cotoneaster</i> (various)	Berries	Shortness of breath, headache, muscle twitching and spasms, collapse, and coma are possible symptoms. It is thought that the concentration is too low to cause significant poisoning unless very large amounts are ingested.
Daphne <i>Daphne</i> (various)	All parts, especially bark and berries	Nausea; vomiting; burning of the throat, mouth, and stomach; bloody diarrhea; drowsiness; headache; weakness; delirium; coma; and death. Dermatitis with blisters, redness, swelling, and itching may result from contact with the sap.
Dieffenbachia, (dumb cane) <i>Dieffenbachia</i> (various)	Juice, all parts	Chewing plant parts results in intense burning, irritation, and pain; redness and swelling of the lips, mouth, and tongue; and excessive drooling and vomiting. Death can occur if the base of the tongue swells enough to block the air passage (but is EXTREMELY rare). Chewing the plant causes enough pain and irritation that large quantities usually are not swallowed.
Elephant's ear <i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	Juice, all parts	Chewing plant parts results in intense burning, irritation, and pain; redness and swelling of the lips, mouth, and tongue; and excessive drooling and vomiting. Chewing the plant causes enough pain and irritation that large quantities usually are not swallowed.
Golden chain <i>Laburnum anagyroides</i>	All parts	Intense vomiting, abdominal pain, decreased blood pressure, increased heart rate, fatigue, confusion, agitation, tremor, delirium, and muscle weakness.
Holly <i>Ilex</i> (various)	Leaves, but especially the berries	Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea, and possibly drowsiness after ingestion of large amounts.

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Ornamental plants		
Hydrangea <i>Hydrangea</i> (various)	Leaves and buds	Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea. Dermatitis may result. The plant contains something that can produce cyanidelike substances, but no recent cases have been reported.
Ivy <i>Hedera</i> (various)	Leaves	Drooling, headache, fever, incoordination, dilated pupils, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, severe diarrhea, agitation, shortness of breath, coma (although symptoms are rarely severe). Skin contact can cause dermatitis.
Jimsonweed* <i>Datura stramonium</i>	All parts	Dilated pupils, blurred vision, dry mouth, red-hot dry skin, thirst, fever, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, urinary retention, constipation, and hallucinations.
Lantana <i>Lantana camara</i>	Unripe or green berries	Fatal; vomiting, diarrhea, incoordination, respiratory distress, dilated pupils, lethargy, muscle weakness, difficulty breathing, coma, and death.
Moonseed <i>Menispermum</i> (various)	Probably all parts but especially the fruit	Drowsiness, seizures, hallucinations, delirium, altered level of consciousness, tingling, and amnesia may occur.
Mountain laurel <i>Kalmia</i> (various)	All parts, especially the leaves	Burning in the mouth, numbness and tingling around the mouth area, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, sweating, decreased blood pressure, decreased heart rate, confusion, and seizures. Small taste amounts are not expected to be dangerous.
Philodendron <i>Philodendron</i> (various)	Juice, all parts	Chewing plant parts results in intense burning, irritation, and pain, redness and swelling of the lips, mouth, and tongue; excessive drooling; and vomiting. Chewing the plant causes enough pain and irritation that large quantities usually are not swallowed.
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Ornamental plants		
Red sage <i>Lantana camara</i>	Unripe or green berries	Fatal; vomiting, diarrhea, incoordination, respiratory distress, dilated pupils, lethargy, muscle weakness, difficulty breathing, coma, and death.
Rhododendron <i>Rhododendron</i> (various)	All parts, especially the leaves	Burning in the mouth, numbness and tingling around the mouth area, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, sweating, decreased blood pressure, decreased heart rate, confusion, and seizures. Small taste amounts are not expected to be dangerous.
Rosary pea* <i>Abrus precatorius</i>	Seeds; seeds need to be chewed to release the toxin.	These plants are not grown in California but are used in seed ornaments and jewelry items. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, bleeding of the gastrointestinal tract, tissue sloughing, liver damage, and weak but fast heart rate. Fatal; a single rosary pea has caused death. (It is very strongly recommended that children not have ANY exposure to this plant.)



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Ornamental plants		
Spanish broom <i>Spartium junceum</i>	All parts, especially the seeds	Intense vomiting, abdominal pain, decreased blood pressure, increased heart rate, fatigue, confusion, agitation, tremor, delirium, and muscle weakness.
Toyon <i>Photinia arbutifolia</i>	Leaves	Shortness of breath, headache, muscle twitching and spasms, and collapse and coma.
Death camas* <i>Zigadenus venenosus</i>	All parts. Young stages are most toxic.	Intense nausea and vomiting followed by decreased heart rate, collapse, weakness, decreased blood pressure, and abnormal heartbeats. Young plants or their bulbs can be mistaken for other plants, including wild onions or sego lilies. (It is strongly recommended that children not have ANY exposure to this plant.)
Plants in fields		
Nightshade <i>Solanum</i> (various)	All parts, especially unripe berry	Common symptoms include nausea, vomiting, headache, and diarrhea. Drowsiness and coma are less common. Decreases in blood pressure and heart rate, with drooling and muscle cramps, may occur but are rare.

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Plants in fields		
Poison hemlock* <i>Conium maculatum</i>	All parts	Fatal; resembles a large wild carrot. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, burning in the throat, abdominal pain, confusion, seizures followed by respiratory depression, muscle pain, and then paralysis. Death is usually rapid and due to respiratory paralysis. (It is strongly recommended that children not have ANY exposure to this plant.)
		
Thorn apple* <i>Datura stramonium</i>	All parts	Dilated pupils, blurred vision, dry mouth, red-hot dry skin, thirst, fever, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, urinary retention, constipation, and hallucinations that are often unpleasant.
Pokeweed* <i>Phytolacca americana</i>	All parts, but especially the roots	Eating leaves and berries causes nausea, intense vomiting, and diarrhea (sometimes foamy) that lasts about 24 hours. Some people have died from eating the root.
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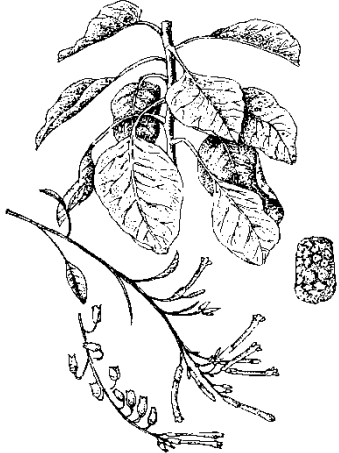
Plant	Toxic Part	Effects of Ingestion
Plants in fields		
Tree tobacco* <i>Nicotiana glauca</i>	All parts	Nausea and vomiting, headache, tremors, seizures, hallucinations, confusion, and hyperventilation. Eating large amounts causes weakness, paralysis, coma, and respiratory failure leading to death. (It is strongly recommended that children not have ANY exposure to this plant.)
		
Plants in swamp or moist areas		
Water hemlock* <i>Cicuta douglasii</i>	All parts, but more concentrated in lower parts of stems and roots	Fatal; drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, increased heart rate, severe abnormal heart rate, decreased blood pressure, violent and painful seizures. Seizure can occur quickly in as little as five minutes after ingestion. Death is a common outcome. (It is strongly recommended that children not have ANY exposure to this plant.)
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Plant	Toxic Part	Effects of Ingestion
Plants in wooded areas		
Black locust <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Bark, sprouts, foliage, seeds; seeds need to be chewed to release the toxin.	Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, bleeding of the gastrointestinal tract, tissue sloughing, liver damage, weak but fast heart rate. (It is strongly recommended that children not have ANY exposure to this plant.)
Elderberry <i>Sambucus</i> (various)	Shoots, leaves	Eating large amounts of the berries may cause nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, and diarrhea along with dizziness, numbness, and stupor. Eating stems, roots, or bark may cause severe diarrhea.
Mistletoe <i>Phoradendron</i> (various)	All parts, especially berries	Eating small amounts may result in mild vomiting and diarrhea. Ingesting concentrated extracts of the plant may produce serious poisoning.
Oak <i>Quercus</i> (various)	Raw acorns, young leaves, sprouts, and buds	Nausea, vomiting, and abdominal pain are common following ingestion. Constipation or bloody diarrhea, excessive thirst, liver damage, and frequent urination are other symptoms that may occur when large amounts are eaten. Do NOT allow children to chew on acorns.

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Plants in wooded areas		
Poison oak Western <i>Toxicodendron</i> <i>[Rhus diversiloba]</i>	All parts: leaves, stems, berries, roots	Skin contact with oily fluid secreted in all parts of plant causes painful, often long-lasting skin eruptions with a burning, itching sensation that develops 30 minutes to five days after exposure. The severity of symptoms depends on the patient's degree of sensitivity, the amount of contact, and the areas of skin exposed. If the plant is ingested, severe vomiting and diarrhea may result. Avoid exposure!
		
Stinging nettles <i>Urtica</i> (various)	Stinging hairs on leaves and stems	Intense itching, stinging, burning, and inflammation of the skin, often resulting in blisters. Stinging can last up to 12 hours. Avoid exposure!
Vegetable garden plants		
Eggplant <i>Solanum osonga</i>	All green parts	Common symptoms include nausea, vomiting, headache, and diarrhea. Drowsiness and coma are less common. Decreases in blood pressure and heart rate, with drooling and muscle cramps, may occur but are rare.
Potato <i>Solanum tuberosum</i>	All green parts	Common symptoms include nausea, vomiting, headache, and diarrhea. Drowsiness and coma are less common. Decreases in blood pressure and heart rate, with drooling and muscle cramps, may occur but are rare.

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Vegetable garden plants		
Rhubarb <i>Rheum rhabarbarum</i>	Leaf blade; stems are edible	Large amounts of raw or cooked leaves can cause vomiting, diarrhea, drowsiness, weakness, kidney and liver damage, and dermatitis.
Tomato <i>Lycopersicon lycopersicum</i>	All green parts	Common symptoms include nausea, vomiting, headache, and diarrhea. Drowsiness and coma are less common. Decreases in blood pressure and heart rate, with drooling and muscle cramps, may occur but are rare.
Fruit trees in orchards or yards		
Apple <i>Malus</i> (various)	Seeds; kernels must be well chewed to release the cyanide component.	Accidentally swallowing whole seeds or pits is NOT likely to cause cyanide toxicity. Headache, dizziness, severe vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea, difficulty breathing, weakness, seizures, disorientation, paralysis, weakness, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, coma, collapse, and death may occur.
Apricots <i>Prunus</i> (various)	Kernel inside hard pit; Kernels must be well chewed to release the cyanide component.	Accidentally swallowing whole seeds or pits is NOT likely to cause cyanide toxicity. Headache, dizziness, severe vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea, difficulty breathing, weakness, seizures, disorientation, paralysis, weakness, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, coma, collapse, and death may occur.
Cherry <i>Prunus</i> (various)	Kernel inside hard pit; kernels must be well chewed to release the cyanide component.	Accidentally swallowing whole seeds or pits is NOT likely to cause cyanide toxicity. Headache, dizziness, severe vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea, difficulty breathing, weakness, seizures, disorientation, paralysis, weakness, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, coma, collapse, and death may occur.

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Fruit trees in orchards or yards		
Crabapple <i>Malus</i> (various)	Seeds; kernels must be well chewed to release the cyanide component.	Accidentally swallowing whole seeds or pits is NOT likely to cause cyanide toxicity. Headache, dizziness, severe vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea, difficulty breathing, weakness, seizures, disorientation, paralysis, weakness, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, coma, collapse, and death may occur.
Peach <i>Prunus</i> (various)	Kernel inside hard pit; kernels must be well chewed to release the cyanide component.	Accidentally swallowing whole seeds or pits is NOT likely to cause cyanide toxicity. Headache, dizziness, severe vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea, difficulty breathing, weakness, seizures, disorientation, paralysis, weakness, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, coma, collapse, and death may occur.
Pear <i>Pyrus</i> (various)	Kernel inside hard pit; kernels must be well chewed to release the cyanide component.	Accidentally swallowing whole seeds or pits is NOT likely to cause cyanide toxicity. Headache, dizziness, severe vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea, difficulty breathing, weakness, seizures, disorientation, paralysis, weakness, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, coma, collapse, and death may occur.
Plum <i>Prunus</i> (various)	Kernel inside hard pit; kernels must be well chewed to release the cyanide component.	Accidentally swallowing whole seeds or pits is NOT likely to cause cyanide toxicity. Headache, dizziness, severe vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea, difficulty breathing, weakness, seizures, disorientation, paralysis, weakness, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, coma, collapse, and death may occur.