

POISONOUS HOUSEPLANTS AT A GLANCE

Plants that endanger humans can also be dangerous to our pets. That is true of cats, dogs, caged birds, rabbits, hamsters, guinea pigs—any pets that roam freely in the home. If cats are not allowed outdoors every day to satisfy their need for grass, they will begin to nibble the houseplants, including the poisonous ones. It is wrong to believe that animals know instinctively what is good for them and what is not. Always put a bowl of cat grass on the windowsill for your room tigers. They love to nibble on umbrella sedge, which does not endanger them and which is sufficiently robust to constantly replace the damage with new shoots. Prickly specimens also hurt animals. Chasing flies at a window has netted many a cat prickles instead of booty. The small wounds often need many weeks to heal.

Dogs, too, get hurt- for example, by the points of agaves. Because both dogs and cats will drink any water, they are also endangered by plant remedies and fertilizers that have been dissolved in leftover plant water.

The strongest poisons in the world are produced by plants. A particularly poisonous specimen is the *Adenium obesum*, which belongs to the Apocynaceae family. It is absolutely essential to avoid contact with its latex. There are plants that are poisonous in all their parts, others that have only poisonous leaves or fruits, and still others that contain poisonous latex. The table below lists the best known house, balcony and container plants, and directs attention to the dangerous parts.



All parts of *Zantedeschia* or Calla Lily endanger household pets.

| BOTANICAL NAME | COMMON NAME | DANGEROUS PARTS |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Acalypha hispida</i> | Acalypha | Latex |
| <i>Adenium obesum</i> | Adenium or Desert rose | Latex |
| <i>Ageratum houstonianum</i> | Ageratum | All parts |
| <i>Aglaonema</i> | Chinese Evergreen | All parts |
| <i>Allamanda cathartica</i> | Allamanda | All parts |
| <i>Anthurium scherzerianum</i> | Flamingo flower | All parts |
| <i>Asparagus</i> | Asparagus | Berries |
| <i>Aucuba japonica</i> | Aucuba | Berries |
| <i>Begonia sermpreflorens</i> hybrids | Wax Begonia hybrids | All parts |
| <i>Browallia</i> | Browallia | All parts |
| <i>Brunfelsia</i> | Brunfelsia | All parts |
| <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> | Boxwood | Leaves |
| <i>Capsicum anuum</i> | Red pepper- Ornamental Pepper | All parts |
| <i>Carissa macrocarpa</i> | Natal palm | All parts, except fruits |
| <i>Cassia</i> | Cassia | All parts |
| <i>Catharanthus roseus</i> | Catharanthus | All parts |
| <i>Cestrum</i> | Cestrum | All parts |
| <i>Clivia miniata</i> | Clivia/ Kafir lily | All parts, especially berries |

| BOTANICAL NAME | COMMON NAME | DANGEROUS PARTS |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Codiaeum variegatum</i> | Leaf Croton | Latex |
| <i>Colchicum autumnale</i> | Autumn Crocus | All parts |
| <i>Convallaria majalis</i> | Lily of the Valley | Berries |
| <i>Cycas revolute</i> | Sago palm | All parts |
| <i>Cytisus</i> | Scotch Broom | All parts |
| <i>Datura</i> | Angel's trumpet | All parts |
| <i>Dieffenbachia</i> | Dieffenbachia | All parts |
| <i>Dipladena</i> | Diplandenia | All parts |
| <i>Euphorbia milii</i> | Euphorbia | Latex |
| <i>Gloriosa suberba</i> | Glory Lily | Tubers |
| <i>Haemanthus</i> | Blood Lily | Bulbs |
| <i>Hedera helix</i> | English Ivy | Berries and Leaves |
| <i>Heliotropium arborescens</i> | Heliotrope | All parts |
| <i>Hippeastrum</i> | Amaryllis | All parts |
| <i>Hoya</i> | Wax Plant | All parts |
| <i>Hyacinthus</i> | Hyacinth | Bulbs |
| <i>Iris</i> | Iris | All parts |
| <i>Jathropha podagrica</i> | Nettle spurge | All parts |
| <i>Lantana</i> | Lantana | All parts |
| <i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> | Sweet Pea | Seeds |
| <i>Lilium</i> | Lily | Bulbs |
| <i>Lonicera</i> | Honeysuckle | Berries |
| <i>Monstera deliciosa</i> | Swiss cheese plant | All parts |
| <i>Narcissus</i> | Narcissus | Bulbs |
| <i>Nerium oleander</i> | Oleander | All parts |
| <i>Pachypodium</i> | Pachypodium | Stem and leaves |
| <i>Petuna</i> | Petuna | All parts |
| <i>Philodendron</i> | Philodendron | All parts |
| <i>Primula obconica</i> | Primrose | All parts |
| <i>Ricinus communis</i> | Castor bean | Seeds |
| <i>Senecio bicolor</i> | Senecio | All parts |
| <i>Solanum pseudocapsicum</i> | Jerusalem Cherry | All parts, especially berries |
| <i>Trachelosperumum jasminoides</i> | Star Jasmine | Latex |
| <i>Tulipa</i> | Tulip | Bulbs |
| <i>Zantedeschia</i> | Calla Lily | All parts |