



Oklahoma Center for
Poison & Drug Information

(800) 222-1222

Holiday Safety

Poisonings During the Holidays

Holiday activities and entertaining increase the risk of an unintentional poisoning. Many poisonings occur when there is a **distraction in the home**, and there are plenty of those during the holidays.

Poisonous Plants

Jerusalem Cherry (or Christmas Cherry): Easily mistaken for cherry tomatoes, sometimes grown as house plants, and may grow as a weed in some places. This plant is poisonous to humans, dogs, cats and birds. Can cause vomiting, drowsiness or restlessness, redness of the skin and hallucinations if swallowed.

Mistletoe: Relatively non-toxic in small amounts but, in large amounts, eating these plants and berries can cause vomiting and may slow heart rate and lower blood pressure. These effects may range from minor to severe depending upon the amount and type of mistletoe eaten.

Holly Berries: Three or more berries, if eaten, can cause upset stomach and vomiting.

Yew: This evergreen shrub resembles a Christmas tree. All parts of the yew are toxic. If swallowed, symptoms include nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and headache. Seizures, low blood pressure and irregular heartbeat are possible with large ingestions.

Poinsettia: The poinsettia is not nearly as poisonous as many people believe. In most cases, children have no symptoms at all, or experience only minor stomach upset or vomiting from eating the leaves. The sap may cause a rash, so the skin should be washed well with soap and water. Pets may experience a rash, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

If you are anticipating a houseful of guests, make sure diaper bags, purses and travel bags are kept out of the reach of small children. Visitors' bags often contain prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications that can be harmful or fatal to small children.

Other potential poisonings that occur during the holiday season include lamp oil, potpourri, bubble lights, ornaments that resemble candy, and accidental and intentional prescription drug overdoses.

Be sure to check new electronic toys and gifts for button batteries and small coin-shaped batteries. They can be extremely dangerous if swallowed. Be sure they are tightly secured and not accessible to children.

POISON
Help
1-800-222-1222



If you have questions about a poisoning during the holidays please don't wait for symptoms to appear!

Specially trained pharmacists and nurses are available 24/7 to assist you with your emergency and answer your questions!

Oklahoma Center for Poison and Drug Information website:

Oklahomapoison.org