

ASPCA Warns About Poisonous Plants

The group's Animal Poison Control Center releases a list of common toxic indoor plants.

Posted: August 31, 2008 2 a.m. EDT

With gardeners preparing to bring the outdoors in for the fall and winter months, the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center reminds pet owners to choose houseplants carefully. Many popular varieties can be toxic to cats and dogs.

When selecting the perfect plant to accent your indoor living spaces, keep this list of toxic houseplants nearby: Lilies. Toxic varieties include stargazer, tiger and Easter lilies. "Even with very small ingestions, severe kidney damage can result," said Dr. Steven Hansen, veterinary toxicologist and ASPCA senior vice president.

English Ivy. The vines of this popular indoor plant contain triterpenoid saponins, which can cause vomiting, abdominal pain, excessive salivation and diarrhea if ingested by cats and dogs.

Peace Lily and Pothos. Commonly displayed in office cubicles and homes because of their ease of care, these popular plants can cause mouth irritation (in the case of the peace lily) and swelling of the gastrointestinal tract (pothos). Keep these two away from cats and dogs.

Oleander. A pretty ornamental plant, oleander is one of the most poisonous varieties to both pets and people. Ingestion can lead to gastrointestinal tract irritation, abnormal heart function, hypothermia and even death.

If you suspect that your cat or dog has ingested a poisonous plant, contact your veterinarian immediately, or call the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center's 24-hour hotline at (888) 426-4435.