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Monthly Safety Blast

Produced by the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education

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Are Poinsettias Poisonous?

For years poinsettias have had the bad reputation of being poisonous. They certainly are not meant to be eaten by humans, pets or livestock and ingesting poinsettias would probably cause some stomach upset, as would eating most any houseplant. However, poinsettias have undergone extensive testing and there is no evidence that they are toxic or unsafe to have in the house. They are also safe to put into the compost.

According to POISINDEX, the service used by every poison control center in the United States, a 50 lb. child would have to eat more than 500 poinsettia leaves to even begin approaching toxic levels.



You Should Still Use Caution when Handling Poinsettias:

A more likely problem to watch out for is contact dermatitis. *Euphorbias*, the plant family that includes poinsettias, exude a milky sap when broken. Think of milkweed, another common Euphorbias. Many people are sensitive to this sap, which can cause an itchy rash. Be especially careful not to rub your eyes after touching the plants. To be safe, wash your hands after handling a poinsettia plant and try to avoid pinching or pruning them with your hands.

They're beautiful, they're **safe** and they remind us of the Holidays.



Take the [Are Poinsettias Poisonous Safety Quiz](#) to test your knowledge!

Resources:

- <http://www.pharmaceuticalonline.com/doc/toxicology-database-0001>
- <https://www.houseplants.about.com/od/poisonousplants>

Disclaimer: The facts and information listed above are merely suggestions for your safety, but are in no way a comprehensive and exhausted list of all actions needed to insure your safety.

Monthly Blast written by SW Ag Center Outreach Education Coordinator, Nykole Kafka Vance, MS, CEP

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