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## Be Aware of the Hidden Dangers of Plants to Your Pets

We recently adopted a puppy after losing our beloved dog of 10 years, and I have been looking forward to having a new helper in my gardens this summer. But like a toddler, he puts everything in his mouth. We haven't had a puppy in more than 25 years and after he ran off with a tulip I had just pulled – tulips are poisonous to dogs – I realized I needed to get smart on which plants in my yard might be harmful to him. Cat owners and parents of young children should also become acquainted with the plants in their yards that may be toxic as well.

A quick internet search turned up more than 100 common plants that are toxic to dogs to some degree and I have a bunch of them in my yard! The number and types were shocking to read.

From aloe and begonias to narcissus and yew, plants many of us have in our gardens can be harmful to pets. Speaking of narcissus, our puppy routinely pulled the blooms off daffodils as I picked them this spring. I had no idea they were toxic for dogs; however, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals lists them as the eighth most poisonous plant to dogs. Ugh.

A complete list of common plants toxic to dogs can be found at [www.asPCA.org](http://www.asPCA.org).

The ASPCA also has lists of plants toxic to cats and other animals. For instance, every part of Asiatic Lilies are toxic to cats, even the pollen. So be very careful when using them in bouquets in a home where cats live.

When I Googled the top 10 plants most poisonous to dogs, I was shocked to see tomato plants at number two! Tomato plants can cause gastrointestinal problems, drowsiness, dilated pupils, slow heart rate, and confusion.

Ivy is everywhere on the Eastern Shore. Consuming ivy can cause vomiting, diarrhea, excessive salivation and drooling, and abdominal pain in dogs.

Another plant common to our area are hostas and they can be deadly. Hostas contain a variety of saponins that are toxic to dogs and other small animals. Saponins foam up as they enter the digestive tract, and the foam paralyzes it. Other plants that contain saponins include Christmas rose, asparagus fern, daisies, soapwort, and corn cockle.

According to the ASPCA, the top 10 most toxic plants for dogs include:

- |                   |                  |                  |              |              |             |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Sago Palm      | 2. Tomato Plants | 3. Aloe Vera     | 4. Ivy       | 5. Amaryllis | 6. Gladiola |
| 7. American Holly | 8. Daffodils     | 9. Baby's Breath | 10. Milkweed |              |             |

The severity of symptoms varies by type of plant, amount of plant material and which part of the plant is consumed, and the size of your pet. Should one of your pets consume a plant known to be toxic, call your vet. Help is also available online and by phone 24 hours a day, seven days a week through [www.petpoisonhelpline.com](http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com) for a \$75 fee.



Asclepias Tuberosa are wonderful for monarchs but very toxic to dogs. Milkweed will induce vomiting and diarrhea, but dogs may also experience difficulty breathing, rapid and weak pulse, dilated pupils, and even kidney or liver failure and death.



Every part of lilies, including Easter, Tiger, Peace, and Daylilies, are highly toxic to cats, but can also cause dogs to become sick.



Hostas contain saponins which can paralyze the digestive tract in dogs.