

# 10 Household Plants That Are Dangerous/Toxic to Dogs and Cats

- Over 700 indoor/outdoor plants contain toxic substances that may harm dogs and cats.
- If these plants are ingested, signs of poisoning can be mild to severe, sometimes even causing death.
- Most houseplants have multiple names, so it is important to confirm that the houseplants you currently own or may purchase are not toxic to your pet.

### Asparagus Fern

Asparagus fern (also called *emerald feather*, *emerald fern*, *sprengeri fern*, *plumosa fern*, and *lace fern*) is toxic to dogs and cats. The toxic agent in this plant is saponin—a steroid found in a variety of plants. If a dog or cat ingests the berries of this plant, vomiting, diarrhea, and/or abdominal pain can occur. Allergic dermatitis (skin inflammation) can occur if an animal is repeatedly exposed to this plant.

### Corn Plant

Corn plant (also known as *cornstalk plant*, *dracaena*, *dragon tree*, and *ribbon plant*) is toxic to dogs and cats. Saponin is the toxic chemical compound in this plant. If this plant is ingested, vomiting (with or without blood), appetite loss, depression, and/or increased salivation can occur. Affected cats may also have dilated pupils.

### Dieffenbachia

Dieffenbachia (commonly known as *dumb cane*, *tropic snow*, and *exotica*) is toxic to dogs and cats. Dieffenbachia contains a chemical that is a poisonous deterrent to animals. If this plant is ingested, oral irritation can occur, especially on the tongue and lips. This irritation can lead to increased salivation, difficulty swallowing, and vomiting.

### Elephant Ear

Elephant ear (also known as *caladium*, *taro*, *pai*, *ape*, *cape*, *via*, *via sori*, and *malanga*) contains a chemical similar to the one in dieffenbachia, so an animal's toxic reaction to elephant ear is similar: oral irritation, increased salivation, difficulty swallowing, and vomiting.

### Lilies

Many plants of the lily family are considered toxic to cats, and some are considered toxic to dogs. Cats are the only animals in which the Easter and stargazer lilies are known to be toxic. Generally, a cat's first toxic reaction to this plant includes vomiting, lethargy, and a lack of appetite, but severe kidney failure, and even death, can quickly follow if a cat is untreated. The peace lily (also known as *Mauna Loa*) is toxic to dogs and cats. Ingestion of the peace lily or calla lily can cause irritation of the tongue and lips, increased salivation, difficulty swallowing, and vomiting.

### Cyclamen

Cyclamen (also known as *sowbread*) is a pretty, flowering plant that is toxic to dogs and cats. If ingested, this plant can cause increased salivation, vomiting and diarrhea. If an animal ingests a large amount of the plant's tubers—which are found at the root, generally below the soil—heart rhythm abnormalities, seizures, and even death can occur.

### Learn More

For a full list of toxic and non-toxic indoor and outdoor plants, visit the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) website at [www.aspc.org](http://www.aspc.org) or The Humane Society of the United States website at [www.humanesociety.org](http://www.humanesociety.org).

### Heartleaf Philodendron

Heartleaf philodendron (also known as *horsehead philodendron*, *cordatum*, *fiddle-leaf*, *panda plant*, *split-leaf philodendron*, *fruit salad plant*, *red emerald*, *red princess*, and *saddle leaf*) is a common, easy-to-grow houseplant that is toxic to dogs and cats. This philodendron contains a chemical that can irritate the mouth, tongue, and lips of animals. An affected pet may also experience increased salivation, vomiting, and difficulty swallowing.

### Jade Plant

Jade plant (also known as *baby jade*, *dwarf rubber plant*, *jade tree*, *Chinese rubber plant*, *Japanese rubber plant*, and *friendship tree*) is toxic to cats and dogs. The toxic property in this plant is unknown, but ingestion of it can cause vomiting, depression, ataxia (incoordination), and bradycardia (slow heart rate; this is rare).

### Aloe Plant

Aloe plant (also known as *medicine plant* and *Barbados aloe*) is a common, succulent plant that is toxic to dogs

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and cats. Aloin is considered the toxic agent in this plant. This bitter, yellow substance is found in most aloe species and may cause vomiting and/or the urine to become reddish.

### Satin Pothos

Satin pothos (also known as *silk pothos*) is toxic to dogs and cats. If ingested by a cat or dog, this plant may irritate the mouth, lips, and tongue. The pet may also experience an increase in salivation, vomiting, and/or difficulty swallowing.