

# what's your Poison?

An update from the Kentucky Poison  
Control Center of Norton Children's Hospital



## Holiday Plants and Flowers

'Tis the season of festive decorations, but hidden among the holiday charm are some potential poison hazards. Let's take a closer look at some of our favorite seasonal plants.

### Poinsettia Plants

While legend holds that these plants are very poisonous, they are actually quite safe to have in a home. However, ingesting a large amount of the plant could lead to nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.



### Christmas Trees and Greenery

Needles from these trees can be harmful if ingested in large quantities. In small amounts, they can cause stomach upset. The biggest issue with children eating these is that they could be a choking risk.

### Holly, Mistletoe, Jerusalem Cherry and Bittersweet

These are all poisonous holiday plants and should not be located where children can reach them. Watch for dried berries that may have fallen to the floor.



## Holiday Decor



Deck the halls with safety savvy. Some holiday decor can pose a risk for small children.

- Angel hair is finely spun glass, which can be irritating to the skin, eyes, and the throat if swallowed. Wear gloves to avoid eye and skin irritation while decorating.
- Older bubble lights contain a small amount of methylene chloride, which is also found in paint removers. Nibbling on an intact light or one "opened" light may cause mild skin or mouth irritation only.
- Icicles or tinsel may cause choking or obstruction, especially in cats or small dogs. Since they may contain lead and tin, they may be toxic with repeated ingestion.
- Snow globes are filled with water or glycerin. The "snow" is calcium carbonate, which is non-toxic. Sometimes the water may be contaminated with bacteria and food poisoning may result. The symptoms of food poisoning include vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach cramps.

## Button Batteries!



These flat-shaped, coin-like batteries are found in many holiday decorations and toys this time of year. They're found year-round in watches, cameras, hearing aids, games and calculators.

If these batteries are swallowed, they can stick in the throat or stomach and cause serious burns. Children have also been known to insert these small objects into their ears or nose.

Be sure to store the batteries and items that use these batteries up and out of reach. If a child's toy or decoration uses button batteries, check to make sure the battery compartment is not easy to open and supervise children during use.

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For poisoning information and  
emergencies:  
1-800-222-1222