

**Your child has been in contact with something in the garden. What should you do?**



© Health Protection Agency

A poison is any substance that may cause harm when you eat it, breathe it in or it comes into contact with your skin or eyes.

Crawling babies and toddlers tend to put everything into their mouths so they are at particular risk. Follow these few safety precautions and help keep your child safe. Know what to do if your child gets hold of something they shouldn't have.



Stay calm.

Take the plant/product away from your child.

Encourage your child to spit out any substance remaining in their mouth (do not perform a blind finger sweep) and check there is no local damage.

**NEVER try to make your child vomit or give ANYTHING to make your child sick.**

If a substance has been splashed in your child's eyes, wash their eyes thoroughly with tap water immediately. Do the same for skin with soap and water.

**Phone your GP or NHS24 (08454 24 24 24) / NHS Direct (0845 46 47) if you are in any doubt or your child is unwell.**

GP Tel:

If possible give the Latin name for the plant (from the plant label) as common names may refer to more than one plant.

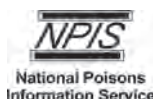
If advised to seek medical attention, remember to take the product container/sample of plant (preferably a section of plant, not just a leaf or berry) with you.

**Phone 999 if your child is unconscious or having a fit.**

**REMEMBER THAT MOST CHILDREN DON'T COME TO SERIOUS HARM FROM ACCIDENTALLY EATING SOMETHING THEY SHOULDN'T HAVE.**

Produced by NPIS Edinburgh

Acknowledgements: RoSPA, Health Scotland, The Scottish Government



Useful websites

[www.nhs24.com](http://www.nhs24.com) / [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

Protect Child [www.protectchild.co.uk](http://www.protectchild.co.uk)

RoSPA [www.rospa.com](http://www.rospa.com)

NPIS [www.spib.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.spib.scot.nhs.uk)

Copyright January 2012



**Keep your child safe in the garden**

**A guide to preventing poisoning**

## What steps can you take to prevent poisoning in the garden?

### ✓ DO'S

- ✓ Teach children not to eat anything that they find outside without checking with you first.
- ✓ Identify the plants already in your garden and avoid adding any harmful plants. Check plant labels or with your local garden centre.
- ✓ Keep the labels for all plants bought.
- ✓ Take extra care to keep your child away from poisonous plants.
- ✓ Remove any mushrooms/toadstools from your garden.
- ✓ Clear up any cat or dog faeces (not poisonous but carry infection).
- ✓ Lock all garden chemicals such as insect killers, rat and mouse poisons, weedkillers, wood preservatives and other pesticides away from children.
- ✓ Keep all chemicals and products in their original containers. Only prepare what you need.
- ✓ If you are called away whilst using a product in the garden put the lid back on the container FIRST and then move it to a safe place.
- ✓ Use slug pellets sparingly (although a few eaten by a child from the ground should not cause problems).

## What steps can you take to prevent poisoning in the garden?

### ✗ DON'TS

- ✗ **Never** transfer chemicals and products into alternative containers, particularly food and drink containers e.g. soft drink bottles.
- ✗ **Never** assume that a plant is edible if you see birds or animals eating it.
- ✗ **Never** use chemicals and products without first reading the instructions for use.
- ✗ **Never** allow children or pets in areas of the garden that you are spraying with weedkiller or insect killer. Do not use sprays and wood preservatives in the garden on windy days.

### What's in your garden?

Some plants and substances in the garden are generally harmless whereas others can cause problems, occasionally serious ones.

Some examples of generally harmless plants and substances found in the garden can be found at [www.spib.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.spib.scot.nhs.uk)

If your child has got hold of something they shouldn't have and you are in any doubt at all, please seek advice, even if it's just a phone call for reassurance (see phone numbers overleaf).



## Potentially Serious Poisonings

Always seek advice immediately if your child eats any of the following:

### Aconite

(*Aconitum napellus* - native monkshood)



### Foxglove

(*Digitalis purpurea*)



### Laburnum

(*Laburnum anagyroides*)



### Yew

(*Taxus baccata*)



© Images Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

### Weedkillers

### Wood preservatives

**Slug pellets** (if more than a few have been eaten)

### Rat and mouse poisons

### Insect killers

### White spirit

The above list is not exhaustive and if a plant/substance isn't listed here, it doesn't mean it is harmless.