

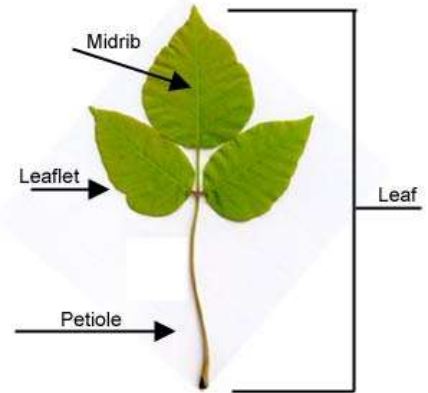


Poison Ivy



What can happen

Poison Ivy contains an oil, urushiol, that causes a skin reaction/rash when touched directly or when you handle contaminated objects. The oil may stick to clothing, boots, tools, golf balls and is easily transferred to hands and face by touching, rubbing or handclasp to other persons who have not been directly exposed at all. Pets can carry the oil on fur or in their saliva. Smoke from burning poison ivy plants may cause lung and skin reactions.



Description

"Leaflets three - Let it be!"

- Poison-ivy is a woody perennial. It may grow as shrubby plants, upright plants 60-90 cm high, or in a vine-like form. Each leaf of poison-ivy consists of three leaflets.
- Poison-ivy has bright green foliage in summer and reddish or bronzy green in spring and early summer. The upper surface is nearly smooth and sometimes glossy. Leaflets are somewhat oval, but can vary in shape and size.



Distribution in Ontario

- Poison-ivy is widespread in southern Ontario and grows in deep woods, open areas; dry, sandy areas, crevices of rocks, or swamps; along the borders of woods, fence-rows, or roadsides.
- When in doubt, avoid touching the unknown plant until identified.

What do I look for?

- Redness, swelling and itching of the skin start after two days of contact with the poison ivy plant. Oozing blisters may appear several days later. The blisters heal in 10-14 days.

How is it treated?

- Wash skin with cold running water and soap within 15 minutes after contact.
- Remove all clothing carefully and wash in soapy water.
- Calamine lotion can be used. A doctor may treat with pills or medicated ointments to relieve swelling and itching.

How can I protect myself?

- Know what the plant looks like and avoid contact with it.
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water or use hand sanitizers.
- When hiking, remain on designated trails.
- Clean your shoes before leaving for next destination.