

## Facts about popular holiday decorations

- \* **Christmas tree ornaments** are not poison hazards, but a young child could choke on small parts.
- \* **Tinsel, icicles, glitter and garlands** are made of plastic, aluminum or tin. **If swallowed**, they are not a problem, but can be a problem in ears, up the nose, etc.
- \* **Poinsettias** may irritate the mouth and the sap may irritate the skin of some people, but otherwise it really is non-toxic.
- \* **Holly berries**, if a handful is eaten, may cause a mild stomachache – but that's all.
- \* **Mistletoe berries**, if eaten, may also cause a stomachache – but no more.
- \* **Evergreen needles** are non-toxic, but their sharpness may cause discomfort. Beware of homemade Christmas tree preservatives – if consumed they may be toxic.
- \* **Artificial snow** contains wax and long-chain fatty acids that are non-toxic. However, repeatedly inhaling the aerosol could cause breathing problems.
- \* **Wax candles** are also non-toxic – but not very tasty!
- \* **Angel hair** is not poisonous, but it is made of spun glass (similar to fiberglass) and may irritate the eyes, skin or mouth.
- \* Commercial **wrapping paper and ribbon** are made with non-toxic dyes.
- \* **Perfumes and colognes** (popular gifts left under the tree) often contain alcohol, but, in virtually all instances, the amount consumed is too small to be a problem.

## Other holiday concerns

- ▶ **Alcohol:** Keep cocktails out of the reach of children, and adults who plan to drive.
- ▶ **Food poisoning:** Cook and store food properly to reduce the risk of food poisoning.
- ▶ **Medicines and vitamins:** Watch for possible hazards brought by your guests or found in homes your children are visiting. Medicine, vitamins and other personal products found in a purse or suitcase can be very tempting to a young child or pet. Provide your guests with a safe place to keep these items.

**Expert Poison Information 24/7: 1-800-222-1222**