

KNOW Before You GO POISON ivy

What is poison ivy?

Poison ivy (and its cousins poison oak & poison sumac) is a plant that can cause a red, itchy and highly uncomfortable rash when its oil, urushiol, touches your skin. You can get the oil on you from both the leaves, the vine and the sticks - even in winter!



Spring

Summer

What is it good for?

While we may run from it, poison ivy's berries are a preferred food for woodpeckers, warblers and other birds. It is also a favorite food of deer, black bears, muskrats and rabbits, who eat the fruit, stems and leaves.

Prepare Yourself

- "Leaves of three, let them be" Know what poison ivy looks like to avoid touching AND walking through it.
- Wear long pants, long-sleeve shirts, socks & fully-enclosed shoes if walking in suspect areas.
- Apply a barrier cream, such as Ivy Block or Stokoguard.



How to Identify Poison Ivy

Knowing what poison ivy looks like & where it is found is the first step towards avoiding it:

1. Poison ivy generally grows in a cluster of low, weed-like plants or woody vines that climb up trees in a layer of glorious green.
2. Edges of leaves are generally smooth or have a few large "teeth." Color changes based on the season - reddish in spring; green in summer; yellow, orange or red in autumn. Berries are typically small and white.
3. In our area of CT, it grows EVERYWHERE!

I've got it. Now what?

Most rashes can be treated at home. Follow these steps immediately after exposure to relieve symptoms:

- Wash contact area with **cold** water.
- Treat exposed clothing with care as oils can linger days afterward. Wash thoroughly using a detergent that removes oil.
- Relieve symptoms with wet compresses, cool baths or non-prescription antihistamines and calamine lotion.
- Natural Remedies - use jewelweed (found all over NCNC) to wash any area touched by poison ivy and as a compress for relief of symptoms.



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