

EMPLOYEE TRAINING RECORD

TRAINING TITLE Poison Ivy

KEY TEACHING POINTS

- Poison ivy is a relative of the Cashew family. Poison Oak, both eastern and western varieties are a relative of poison ivy and are not related to the oak tree.
- Poison ivy plants contain an oily substance called urushiol which causes an allergic reaction ranging from blistering and itching to more severe, generalized cases requiring medical attention. Urushiol is in the plant's sap and can be found in all parts of the plant; stem, leaves, roots and berries. Poison ivy can cause the uncomfortable blistering and itching at any time of the year, even after the plant is dead. Ivy branches cut and left to dry for 18 months were found to still contain enough urushiol to cause a reaction.
- You need not come into direct contact with the plant to come up with a case of poison ivy. Tools such as chain saws, shovels, axes, etc., or camping equipment including fishing and hunting gear, even golf clubs that have been in contact with the plant can transfer enough urushiol to result in a rash. If these items have been in contact with the plant, they should all be washed before using again. Smoke from burning poison ivy plants can be inhaled and cause an allergic reaction in the lungs which in extreme cases can cause death. Even petting the family dog after it's romped through a bed of poison ivy can result in an outbreak.
- The best defense is to learn how to identify the poison ivy. The plant can range in size from a small shrub to a towering vine climbing 75 feet or more into the treetops. But regardless of it's size, the leaves of the plant are distinctive. The large, wavy-edged leaves grow in clusters of three, with the middle leaflet on the longest stem. The leaves are purplish red in the spring and glossy green in the summer. Small whitish-green flowers cluster near the leaves in May or early June, and dull white berries begin forming in close clusters about mid-June.
- Not everyone who comes in contact with poison ivy will develop symptoms. Some people, in fact, may not be allergic to urushiol at all. But it would be a mistake for them to rely on that immunity. People who have never developed a poison ivy rash in their lives may suddenly develop the allergy after a single exposure. People who have previously developed poison ivy rashes will develop symptoms within a few hours after exposure.
- Exposure to the plant calls for a thorough scrubbing with a soap with lots of lather several times within the first half-hour of exposure. If you must work in and around this plant, protect your skin with long sleeves, pants and gloves. These clothes should also be carefully handled and laundered before being worn again.
- Mild, localized cases usually respond to warm water compresses. Calamine lotion or a similar commercial preparation may be used to relieve the burning and itching. The primary purpose of over the counter medications is to make you as comfortable as possible while the poisoning runs it's course, which in mild cases takes two weeks. In extensive cases where the dermatitis is near your eyes, covers 20% of the body, is near the genitals, or becomes infected, you should immediately see a physician.

TEST

QUESTION	ANSWERS	
	TRUE	FALSE
1 Exposure to the plant calls for a thorough scrubbing with a soap with lots of lather several times within the first half-hour of exposure.		
2 You need not come into direct contact with the plant to come up with a case of poison ivy.		
3 In extensive cases where the dermatitis is near your eyes, covers 20% of the body, is near the genitals, or becomes infected, you should immediately see a physician.		
4 Poison ivy plants contain an oily substance called urushiol which causes an allergic reaction ranging from blistering and itching to more severe, generalized cases requiring medical attention.		
5 The plant can range in size from a small shrub to a towering vine climbing 75 feet or more into the treetops.		
EMPLOYEE'S NAME	EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE	DATE
INSTRUCTOR'S NAME	INSTRUCTOR'S SIGNATURE	DATE

1. True 2. True 3. True 4. True 5. True