

This Plant Will Kill Your Dog (and maybe your kids) (1)

October 3rd, 2007

We were letting our dog play outside all day Sunday and upon checking on him found that he had yanked a small houseplant off of the deck and was chewing on the root of it. He chews on all kinds of plants in the yard and I thought of tossing it over the fence but figured he would just try to dig under to get it so unfortunately I let him keep it.

A couple hours later we let him in the house and he's foaming yellow froth, drooling, and shaking. 20 minutes later we are in the emergency vet and are told the prognosis is not good and he'll likely die. The plant is called a Sago Palm (2) and its highly poisonous to both pets and humans. A chemical in the plant called cycasin is toxic and often causes permanent liver damage as well as neurological damage if enough of the poison is absorbed by the body. The seeds are the most poisonous part of the plant and the effects on humans are seizures, coma and death.

Of course you and I wouldn't just yank off a chunk of this plant and gnaw on it but the seeds are colorful so if you have kids and Sago palm in your yard educate them on the danger or get rid of the plant.

Fortunately our dog was one of the lucky ones. I later discovered that our dog vomited the plant in the yard soon after swallowing it, and after 2 days in the vet on IV, and having a ball of charcoal inserted in his stomach, a test revealed that his liver was recovering and he came home. Sadly few people are aware of how dangerous this plant, many have lost their dogs, (3) and even many veterinarians are unaware. This plant doesn't carry a warning label and is becoming popular in Walmart, Lowes, and Home Depot so spread the word.

(1) <http://www.tonyspencer.com/2007/10/03/this-plant-will-kill-your-dog-and-maybe-your-kids/>

(2) http://en.wikipedia.org:80/wiki/Cycas_revoluta

(3) <http://network.bestfriends.org:80/losangeles/news/1154.html>