

POISONOUS PLANTS IN SRI LANKA

Plants are very important part of the ecosystem. Some plants are edible, wild, medicinal and ornamental. Some plants may be poisonous. Plant poisoning is common among children following accidental ingestion. There are few deaths reported due to plant poisoning .

CASTOR OIL PLANT- *Ricinus communis* -
බෙහෙත් වඳරු, තෙල් වඳරු



Poisonous part: Seeds
Toxin: Toxalbumin -ricin.

PHYSIC NUT - *Jatropha curcas*- වැට වඳරු



Fruit: ellipsoid scarcely lobed, and contains black seeds when ripe

Poisonous part: Seeds

Toxin: Curcin is found throughout plant with maximum concentration in seeds.

HONDALA - *Adenia hondala*- හොඳල



The fruits and leaves resemble passion fruit in appearance. Therefore, responsible for accidental poisoning among children.

Poisonous parts: Fruits and leaves

Toxins: Cyanogenic glycoside and toxalbumin

NIYANGALA - *Gloriosa superba*- නියගල



Colorful flower is the notable feature
Tubers are “L” shape, can be distinguished from Hulankiriya tubers.

Poisonous parts: All parts of the plant are poisonous. The highest toxicity is in the tuberous rhizome

Toxin: alkaloid- Colchicine

OLINDA - *Abrus precatorius*- ඔලින්ද



Seeds dark red or scarlet in colour with black spot at the hilus

Poisonous part: seeds

Toxin - Abrin (glycoprotein) & Abric acid (glycoside).

CORAL PLANT-*Jatropha multifida*

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An ornamental plant called ‘kapumkiriya’ because latex of the plant is applied to wounds and ulcers

Poisonous parts: Fruits and the latex of the whole plant

Toxin: Toxalbumin Curcin

DIYA KADURU - *Cerbera manghas* -දිය කදුරු



The fruit is green. Oval in shape. When ripe it turns pink or yellow. The fruit resembles a mango and has a fibrous pericarp.

Poisonous parts: All parts of the plant are toxic and fruits having the highest toxicity.

Toxins: Glycosides (cerberin, odollum and thevetin)

DIVI KADURU - *Pagiantha dichotoma* –

දිවි කදුරු



Fruits are pendulous and usually in paired, wedge-shaped. Yellowish-orange in colour when ripe

The yolk like a pulp, dark red in colour and seeds are embedded within it

Poisonous part- Fruits

Toxin: Toxic alkaloid “Atropine”

KAHA KANERU- *Thevetia peruviana* –

කහ කනේරු



Flowers: prominent. yellow in colour

The fruit is green when immature and yellow to black when mature, with three ridges. Several seeds can be seen in a fruit.

Poisonous parts;All parts of the plant are toxic, fruits having the highest toxicity.

Toxin: Cardiac glycosides (Thevetin A and Thevetin B)

ATTANA - *Datura metel* – අත්තන



Fruit oval or round in shape, thorny, light green in colour.

Flower Trumpet in shaped white or light purple in colour.

Seeds brown in colour

Poisonous part: seeds

Toxin- Tropane alkaloids (belladonna alkaloids) – atropine.

GODA KADURU - *Strychnos nux vomica*-

ගොඩ කඳුරු



The fruit is green. Round in shape. Turns soft orange when ripe. Seeds are concave on one side and convex on the other side greenish gray in colour

Poisonous part- seeds

Toxin: - highly toxic alkaloids- strachine, brucine and loganin

HABARALA - *Alocasia macrorrhiza*- හබරලා



Commonly found in all village gardens.

Toxic parts: Stems, leaves, petioles and raw yams

Toxin: Calcium oxalate crystals and unidentified volatile compounds highly irritative and corrosive.

FIRST AIDS:

Ingestion:

- Reassure the patient
- Do not induce vomiting using coconut milk, salt water or any other liquid
- If the patient is drowsy or unconscious, keep in left lateral position with elevated chin
- Take the patient to the nearest hospital immediately.
- If possible, take a piece of plant for identification

Eye exposure:

- Rinse the eye thoroughly with cool running water at least 15 -20 minutes
- Do not apply any medicine or oil products to eyes

Skin exposure:

- Wash exposed area thoroughly with soap and water

DO & DON'T

- Keep plants, seeds, fruits, stored out of reach of children.
- Remove toxic plants from your garden & home
- Teach children not to put any parts of a plant in to the mouth.
- Do not allow children to suck nectar from flowers.
- Do not eat wild plants especially unknown mushrooms.
- Do not make home -made medicines from unknown plants.

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