

Community Health Newsletter

Week Thirteen



M: Mistletoe and Other Holiday Plants



As it gets colder and over the Holidays, we tend to bring nature indoors, but we need to be cautious.

Mistletoe is an evergreen plant with white berries. Mistletoe poisoning occurs when any part of this plant

is consumed, and that includes drinking tea made from the plant or its berries.

- This Wisconsin Poison Center reports that as few as 20 berries from holly (*Ilex*) can kill a child. Pets are also at risk.
- Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus*), Jerusalem cherry (*Solanum pseudocapsicum*) and yew (*Taxus*) berries, stems and leaves are also poisonous.

Surprisingly, it is an urban legend that poinsettia is poisonous, but the plant is not meant to be eaten.

Chocolate can be deadly for dogs. Coffee, tea, mushrooms, grapes, raisins, onions, garlic, and Macadamia nuts are also not recommended for dogs or cats.

Recipe: Baked Apples and Sweet Potatoes

5 cooked sweet potatoes
4 apples
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup margarine
1 teaspoon nutmeg
1/4 cup hot water
2 Tablespoons honey

Instructions:

1. Boil 5 sweet potatoes in water until they are almost tender.
2. After the sweet potatoes cool, peel and slice them.
3. Peel the apples. Remove the cores, and slice the apples.
4. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

5. Grease the casserole dish with butter or margarine.
6. Put a layer of sweet potatoes on the bottom of the dish.
7. Add a layer of apple slices.
8. Add some sugar, salt, and tiny pieces of margarine to the apple layer.
9. Repeat steps 6, 7, and 8 to make more layers of sweet potatoes, apples, and sugar/salt.
10. On the top layer of apples, sprinkle the rest of the brown sugar and margarine pieces.
11. Sprinkle the top layer with nutmeg.
12. Mix the hot water and honey together. Pour the mix over the top layer.
13. Bake for about 30 minutes until apples are tender.

Source: USDA SNAP-Ed Connection

ACTIVITY TIP

With the Holidays approaching, you probably need to prepare for family and friends. Exercise as you prepare!

- Clear out clutter. Bend and lift with bent knees. Do the steps to the basement or attic.
- Put lots of energy into vacuuming under the furniture.
- Use those muscles to polish windows and furniture.

If you shop for Holiday presents at shopping malls, add mall walking to your trip. Use steps instead of escalators. Park as far as you can from the store and walk briskly.

Act fast if you think a person or pet has been poisoned. Call your local poison center.

You can reach your local poison control center anywhere in the U.S. by dialing 1-800-222-1222

