

Poison_Oak_Ivy_2004.txt

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Date: Wed, 22 Jun 1994 08:57:56 -0700
From: "Eugene \
\
Subject: Re: [1/m 11/1/93] Oak/Ivy Distilled Wisdom (18/28) XYZ

With you addition:

Reply-To: \
Followup-To: poster
Distribution: world
Organization: NASA Ames Research Center, Moffett Field, CA
Keywords:

Panel 18

Subject: FAQ on Poison Oak/Ivy

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Poison Oak and Ivy

Summary

If you do nothing, it'll heal in two weeks. If you try all these over the counter and/or natural remedies, wait 14 days. If you go to the doctor for serious mind altering steroids, it's gone within a day.

What is it and how does it work?

Various species of the genus *Rhus*. The sap and crushed leaves contain a chemical which is absorbed by skin cells. The body mounts an immune response to these contaminated cells. Once begun, the reaction ends only when all the contaminated cells have been shed. This is one argument for scratching as much as possible, at the expense of additional scarring.

What are effective treatments?

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There are a lot of conflicting suggestions for treatment. Antihistamines are either very effective or worthless. If the affected area is small enough, self treatment with over the counter remedies can provide 'temporary relief'. One cheap suggestion is to apply very hot (but not scalding) water to the area, which is supposed to provide several hours of relief by deadening the nerves in the area. One person reported losing a lot of skin with this method. Others report that the itching recurs worse than before, possibly due to increased blood flow in the area. I did not try this method.

Various over the counter remedies (rhuligel, caladryl, calamine lotion, benadryl) contain alcohol which appears to work by cooling and drying the area. This is reputed to cause cracking and even more itching. In my case, the itching returned very quickly. Hydrocortisone cream is supposed to be effective, although some people indicate that over the counter concentrations are too weak to be effective. I observed no response to over the counter hydrocortisone.

Symptoms may persist for up to two weeks after exposure. None of the above remedies will reduce this time.

For more serious or widespread cases, a doctor can prescribe steroids which apparently suppress the immune response to contaminated cells. Topical steroid creams are less effective, but may be preferable because they aren't systemic (absorbed) (some people warn that this is not true when used in the quantities required for a large affected area). Oral, systemic gluco-cortico-steroids may cause behavioral changes, but are effective and rapid (my symptoms disappeared within 24 hours).

How can I prevent this?

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Learn to recognize and avoid the plant. If exposed, wash the affected area as quickly as possible with soap and cold water (hot water is reputed to cause the pores to open and allow the oak oil in). A product called Tecnu is supposed to break down the active ingredient in the oil. It's available at some drug stores, or from Solutions (1-800-342-9988). It's supposedly recommended by power company linemen. The oil is very easily spread, and can persist in crystalline form on clothing or other contacted items (including pets) for many months (years?), so you should wash anything you may have touched. Scratching affected areas after symptoms develop can not spread the infection, but different levels of exposure, and secondary exposures, can cause delayed reactions (2-3 days) in adjacent areas, giving the impression of spreading.

There are supposed to be naturopathic regimens to develop immunity to poison oak. Some people are naturally immune.

Under no circumstances should you burn the plant; the smoke is as potent as the plant itself.
"Inhaling the smoke can produce a systemic reaction, including potentially serious lung inflammation."

References:

Medicine for Mountaineering.

From: Roni

Subject: Poison ivy treatment (Hot showers)

A ways back I EMAILED you a response to your posting on poison ivy. I believe that you responded inviting me to send more info (sorry, I lost my copy of your response). Here is a direct quote from my source. I like the book; it's easy to understand and not condescending. The poison ivy - hot shower treatment described works extremely well for me. It has also helped relieve itching from multiple mosquito bites. Its main drawback is that it is a HOME

remedy - not very helpful on the trail.

>From "Take Care of Yourself - A Consumer's Guide to Medical Care," by Donald M. Vickery, M.D. and James F. Fries, M.D., Addison-Wesley, 1977 (7th printing).

p. 132, Poison Ivy and Oak:

"Poison Ivy and Poison Oak need little introduction. The itching skin lesions which follow contact with these and other plants of the Rhus family are the most common example of a larger category of skin problems known as "contact dermatitis." Contact dermatitis simply means that something has been applied to the skin which has caused the skin to react to it. An initial exposure is necessary to "sensitize" the patient; a subsequent exposure will result in an allergic reaction if the plant oil remains in contact with the skin for several hours. The resulting rash begins after 12 to 48 hours delay and persists for about two weeks. Contact may be indirect, from pets, contaminated clothing, or smoke from burning Rhus plants. It can occur during any season.

Home Treatment:

There are many approaches to the treatment of poison ivy. The best is to avoid the plants, which are hazardous even in the winter when they have dropped their leaves. Next best is to remove the plant oil from the skin as soon as possible. If the oil has been on the skin for less than six hours, thorough cleansing with strong soap, repeated three times, will usually prevent reaction.

Many physicians recommend cool compresses of Burrow's Solution (Domeboro, Bur-Veen, Bluboro) or Aveeno Bath (one cup to a tub full of water). The old standby, calamine lotion, is sometimes of help in early lesions, but may spread the plant oil which is causing the irritation in the first place. Be sure to cleanse the skin, as above, even if you are too late to prevent the rash entirely. Another useful method of obtaining symptomatic relief is the use of a hot bath or hot shower. Heat releases histamine, the substance in the cells of the skin which causes the intense itching. Therefore, a hot shower or bath will cause

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intense itching as the histamine is released. The heat is gradually increased to the maximum tolerable and continued until the itching has subsided. This process will deplete the cells of histamine and the patient will often obtain eight hours of relief from the itching. This method has the advantage of not requiring frequent application of ointments to the lesions and is a good way to get some sleep at night. Poison ivy or oak will persist for the same length of time despite the medication. If secondary bacterial infection occurs, healing will be delayed; hence scratching is not helpful. Cut the nails to avoid damage to the skin through scratching."

Roni Burrows | ThE
aivab | uSuAL
Arizona State University | DisCLAI Mers
Chemical, Bio, & Mat'l's Engineering | aPply

Date: Fri, 4 Dec 92 12:47:28 -0800
From: Kristann
Subject: Re: [l/m 4/15/92] Oak/Ivy Distilled Wisdom (18/28) XYZ

I use a fabric soap called Fels Nephtha (sp?) after exposure. It was suggested in a first aide class my mom took, and it works great for getting the oils off your skin.

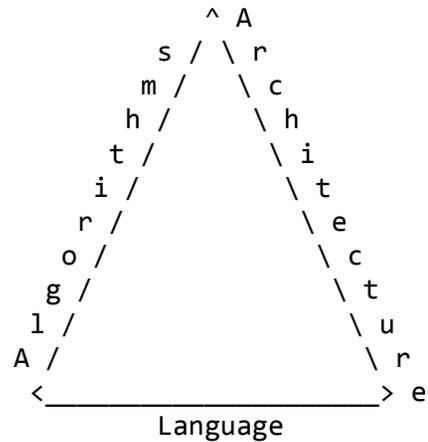
Date: Fri, 18 Jun 93 21:38:25 PDT
From: platt
Subject: Poison Oak, accumulated wisdom

I went to my dermatologist when I got some poison oak.. He said, "0.5% Hydrocortisone on Poison Oak is like trying to put out a forest fire by pissing on it."

Then, he gave me some halobetasol propionate (topical cream, by

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prescription only)... Within a few hours, the itchiness went away and stayed away with repeated application. No mind-altering systemic steroids. He called this stuff the "tactical nuclear weapon" against poison oak. I highly recommend it.



Date: Thu, 18 Nov 1993 19:42:40 -0500 (EST)
From: "Jerry M. Wright" <jmwright
Subject: Poison ivy

I'd like to add my \$0.02 worth to the poison ivy lore. I've come across some stuff called Tecnu and it has worked quite well both immediately after exposure and after appearance of a rash. It is formulated to dissolve the ivy oils and allow you to rinse them off your skin. Even after the rash has appeared, the oils remain causing further irritation and will spread. One hiker this year came up with a really extensive rash on her forearm at the end of the day. We used the stuff and it stopped the rash from spreading and substantially reduced the itching. A couple of other experiences with it have had similar results - just remember to follow the label directions. I don't know the distribution area but I've

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seen the stuff in most drug stores in the DC area and the company is based in Oregon. (BTW the number for information on the product is 1-800-itching)

jmwright

Sometimes it is necessary to grab the bull by the tail and face the situation.

Date: Fri, 19 Nov 93 13:06:09 PST

From: bdrake

Eugene--

A couple of months ago, I removed a large amount of poison oak from a tree (6 hours work, heavy sweating). I thought I was immune. :) I contracted poison oak on my forearms and stomach (solidly) and had scattered patches on the rest of my body (interestingly, none on my face, part of which was uncovered).

Anyway, the point of this is that a friend who works at JPL gave me a bottle of Tecnu. It's terrific! I followed the directions on the bottle the first couple of times (rub for 2 minutes, rinse with cold water; repeat process with warm water if itching persists), but I discovered that the best treatment was to rub the Tecnu on and then spray hot water on it in the shower (we have a detachable shower head). That felt GREAT!!! If I were a dog, my foot would thump up and down. The itching would stay away for 6-8 hours afterwards.

Tecnu says not to apply it to broken skin, which I did anyway when parts of the skin near my wrists blistered and oozed. The Tecnu dried the blisters up immediately, and there is no scarring of the skin.

Tecnu's main ingredients are propylene glycol and polyethylene glycol, which makes me wonder if anti-freeze wouldn't help if one were in a remote area (don't some types of anti-freeze contain those chemicals?).

--Barry

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From: Kevin Anthony Scaldeferri <coolhand

For on the trail treatment and prevention you can't beat nature's own remedy, jewelweed. It's almost always found close to ivy, so it's usually available when you need it. Crush a few leaves and rub them on your skin, or crush and soak in water for a larger amount.

Kevin Scaldeferri
coolhand

Newsgroups: rec.gardens
Subject: Posion Ivy- Everything You Wanted To Know--
From: Ron
Date: 21 May 94 21:23:02 CST
Lines: 454

I found this document in my files. Its a compilation of several items from here and there- Appolgies to any authors whos' names were inadvertantly deleted--

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Subject: Re: Poison Ivy, Oak, etc.
Date: 1 Jun 92 16:30:07 GMT

* Poison Oak, Poison Ivy, and Poison Sumac do pretty much the same thing to you. There is heated debate among botanists about whether Poison Oak and Poison Ivy really the same species. Poison Sumac is at least closely related.

* They hurt you through an oil that transfers to your skin, or which

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you can inhale from the fumes of the burning plant. The oil doesn't wash off with plain water. Ordinary soap usually doesn't do it either. Some people claim to be immune to the irritation from this oil. A subset of these have rolled around in Poison Ivy to prove it. A subset of these have subsequently come down with severe cases of the rash. It would be prudent to avoid Poison Ivy.

- * The best thing I've found to deal with Poison Ivy is a product called "Technu Poison Oak and Ivy Cleanser" I found in the first-aid section of the drug store. It's a liquid soap that can be used to try and wash out the irritating oil before or after the rash develops (sooner is better). One caution that isn't sufficiently emphasized in the directions: The stuff has a mild anesthetic effect. This makes it possible to wash/scratch the affected area too vigorously. This breaks down the skin's ability to hold together. The effect is like a second-degree burn or the skin underneath a blister. Very painful, and now you have to treat it like a burn, with all the attendant danger of infection, etc. Keep the washing with the Technu gentle, and you should have no problem.

Control:

1. The darn stuff grows roots all over the place, just like lots of ivy. Each section seems to be able to grow without much help from the momma plant, once it gets going. That means your ordinary weed killers won't have as much effect on it as you would like. So what if it dies here, it just keeps going over there, under those rocks. We've used Roundup, and the long term effect seems to be that the ivy backs off, waits for everything else that the Roundup killed to decay, and then fills up the space vacated by its wimpy dead friends. Other weed killers, the kind you wouldn't want to have around your horses, may do better. We don't know.

2. You can rip it out by the roots. You'll need equipment and a method. Put on old clothes and tall rubber boots. Put on rubber gloves and coveralls. Let your beard grow a few days if you can, too. Wear a hat, preferably one that protects your ears. Put leather garden gloves over the rubber gloves. Rip the ivy out, being careful not to get it on your face. DON'T scratch any itches, DON'T slap mosquitos, DON'T try to get that little black fly that's starting to munch on your eyeball. Goggles or a beekeeper's bonnet might be helpful, you know. Put all the ivy in a gubbidge bag in a gubbidge bucket, and tie it up. Don't touch the bag again without gloves.

To undress: Take off the garden gloves and throw them away, or drop them right into the washer. NOW WASH YOUR HANDS, that is, wash the rubber gloves. With the rubber gloves still on, remove the coveralls and the boots. The coveralls go right into the washer, along with your hat. Wash the boots. Remove the rest of your clothing, and put it all in the washer. NOW WASH YOUR HANDS before you touch yourself -anywhere-. Yes, especially -there-. Be careful where you step, too, so you don't walk in bare feet where you trod with ivy boots. Take a shower or two. Apply anti-histamine or cortisone ointment, or your other Favourite Cure if you discover, a day or two later, that you got some ivy on you anyway, in spite of the precautions.

To wash the clothes: add Amway Tri-Zyme or some other good enzyme powder, and soak the clothes for an hour. Then wash them. Then wash them again.

3. Goats eat poison ivy. Keep goats, and they will eat your ivy, along with lots of other stuff.

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Here's what I've learned over the last few years from experience and also from research at the local University Library. I've spent hours going through dermatology journals reading up on this stuff. If anyone finds mistakes below, or has evidence to the contrary, feel free to post or e-mail me. I'll try and keep this up-to-date.

ON THE RASH:

- * The irritant in poison ivy, poison sumac, and poison oak is urushiol. Urushiol is also found in the lacquer tree, but I doubt you have one of those. The rash you get is an allergic reaction. Everything I say below about poison ivy should also apply to poison oak and sumac.
- * If you brush up against a healthy undamaged plant, you won't usually get urushiol on you. You usually have to come in contact with a damaged leaf. Almost all plants have damaged leaves - either from insects, weather, or from your stepping on them.
- * The toxin exists in varying concentrations in the leaves, stems, and roots. I have gotten a rash from all three, although the reaction I got from the roots was very minor.
- * The oil is easily transferred from one place to another. For example, I got some on my shoelaces once, and I kept getting poison ivy on my hands for a couple of months before I figured out what was going on :-(. Once it is on your hands, it can, and will, end up anywhere on your body :-0 . It is also common for it to be picked up on the hair of your dog or horse, and then repeatedly transferred to you.
- * Once you get the oil on clothing, it can sit for months and still cause

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a rash upon contact with your skin. For example, lets say you get some poison ivy oil on your boots, then put the boots away for the winter. Next spring you get out the boots and go for a walk - but not in the woods. A few days later, voila - your hands are breaking out from putting on your boots and tying the laces.

- * The first time you in your life you're exposed to urushiol, you will not react to it. In other words, you get one free pass. After that, your body develops an allergic reaction, which is the rash you get from subsequent exposures. The literature says it is possible to lose your allergic response if you are not exposed for a long period of time, like 10 years or more. So, if you haven't gotten poison ivy in 10 years, you may get another free pass. There are a number of other chemical irritants (like trinitrochlorobenzene) that also cause this type of allergic response in your skin, but hopefully you'll never have to worry about them.
- * There is no known way to build up an immunity to the oil. There is anecdotal evidence of people drinking teas made from poison ivy to try and build up an immunity. They got sick and got rashes on their butts.
- * Not all humans are allergic to urushiol. I think about 1 in 7 (or was it 1 in 15) are not allergic. Native Americans (a.k.a. American Indians) tend to NOT be allergic.
- * If you think you've come into contact with poison ivy, throw everything in the wash when you get home. Wash yourself with COLD WATER. The oil is supposedly soluble in water. If you use warm water, it will cause the pores in your skin to open up, enabling the oil to get deeper in your skin.
- * Tall socks and long pants are highly recommended when hiking through poison ivy. In places where the ivy can grow tall, a long-sleeve shirt is also a good idea.

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- * If you really want to hike in shorts in poison-ivy country, there is this goop you can put on your legs that will keep it off your skin. I've used it before and didn't get a rash, but I don't know if I came into physical contact with poison ivy. This goop is available at larger sporting-goods stores.
- * Interestingly, I've found that the best way to keep from getting poison ivy is to learn to recognize the plants. After unsuccessfully spraying it for years (it's everywhere on our property), I can spot it at 100 ft. I used to get a rash every year - sometimes 2 or three times in a summer. This was simply because I didn't notice where I was walking or sitting. I spend more time in our woods than ever, now, and I haven't picked up poison ivy in 2 years. This co-existence works fine for me, but not always as well for unescorted visitors :-(. There can be substantial variation between plants, so learn to recognize all the variants of leaf formation, etc.
- * If you get a rash, you pretty much have to wait it out. However, you CAN treat the symptoms - namely itching. I've found hydrocortizone cream to work well at reducing the itch. I believe The FDA has recently increased the non-prescription strength from .5% to 1%, so make sure you get the stronger stuff. If it's really bad, see your doctor. Although it's unlikely, you want to make sure any complications are treated quickly. This is more likely to happen if you are exposed over a very large part of your body.
- * Each person reacts a little differently, but on me, it takes 1.5-2 days after exposure to notice an itch, and 2-3 weeks before the blisters have gone away.
- * As long as you've washed the original oil off your skin, the puss from the blisters should not re-infect your skin. It's just puss, and does not contain urushiol.

ON GETTING RID OF THE PLANTS:

- * If you only have a small number of plants, you can physically remove them, but BE CAREFUL. Use rubber gloves, and put the plants and the gloves in a plastic bag when done. Wash ANYTHING that touches the plants in cold water.
- * I've had no success with 2,4-D. Although the packaging says it's indicated for poison ivy, I've found that the leaves just turn brown and fall off, and then come right back. Even after 2 or 3 applications, the plants keep coming back.
- * Roundup (or one of the cheaper equivalents) works much better, but you'll need 2 applications, 4-6 weeks apart.
- * If you do go the chemical route, I suggest getting a dye from your local nursery and mixing it with the Roundup so you can see where you've sprayed. They call it a marker, since it 'marks' where you've sprayed. There are other types of markers, including foams, but I've had better luck with dyes. The kind I use is dark blue, and disappears within a day of use. I've usually been able to get away with 1/2 the recommended dose - your mileage may vary. The advantages are that you can verify hitting all the leaves, but you don't end up re-spraying stuff you've already hit. The end result is better kill, less cost (because you use less Roundup), and less damage to the environment.
- * Even if you think you've killed all the plants, expect some to come back from the roots next year.
- * NEVER, NEVER, NEVER burn poison ivy. The oil can be carried up with the smoke, and can be VERY nasty if inhaled.

Andy Goris

>* The best thing I've found to deal with Poison Ivy is a product
> called "Technu Poison Oak and Ivy Cleanser" I found in the first-aid
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> underneath a blister. Very painful, and now you have to treat it
> like a burn, with all the attendant danger of infection, etc. Keep
> the washing with the Technu gentle, and you should have no problem.
> - Paul Drews

Actually, the best thing to use is ethanol. Probably cheaper than
the above product, anyway. Ethanol acts as a solvent for the toxin
found in poison ivy (Toxicodendrol, I believe).

there's a blurb in the latest Business Week on the University of
Mississippi, in that they have figured out more about what Poison Ivy
does to you - and have some level of immunization shot. one per year
is what they mentioned in the article. it's the Business Week with the
cover about women in industry.

Date: 3 Jun 92 15:15:14 GMT

>there's a blurb in the latest Business Week on the University of
>Mississippi, in that they have figured out more about what Poison Ivy
>does to you - and have some level of immunization shot. one per year
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>cover about women in industry.

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They've actually had the immunization for several years. Last I knew there was one problem. You need to make sure you get the shot EARLY in the year, *BEFORE* poison ivy is up and growing. Encountering poison ivy shortly after the shot can cause an *Extremely* nasty case of the stuff...

>From an upcoming medical journal article.

Toxicodendron species (Poison Oak, Poison Ivy, Poison Sumac)
Anacardiaceae (Cashew or Sumac family). The genus contains approximately 15 species found in eastern Asia, North and South America.

The literature contains considerable nomenclatural controversy and confusion, and most early works place ~Poison Oak,~ ~Poison Ivy~ and ~Poison Sumac~ in the genus Rhus. In addition, medical literature usually persists in referring to the toxic effects of these plants as Rhus dermatitis. Recent taxonomic studies place these toxic plants of the Anacardiaceae in the genus Toxicodendron, while the genus Rhus contains nontoxic plants.

Toxicodendron is generally known by the public as the most villainous plant for its ability to produce contact dermatitis. Although the consequences of Toxicodendron exposure are usually well-known, most individuals are unable to identify this genus, which is generally characterized by shiny trofoliate (three-leaflet) leaves (Toxicodendron vernix has 7 - 13 leaflets.) The plant's ability to grow either as a shrub or as a woody opportunistic vine that commonly climbs trees and fences confuses the identification process. Yet more confusion persists because of the public's use of common names. The most important toxic species, Toxicodendron diversilobum (T. & G.) Greene (Poison Oak), Toxicodendron radicans (L.) O. Kuntze (Poison Ivy) and Toxicodendron vernix (L.) O. Kuntze (Poison Sumac), are clear and distinct species, although they are often lumped together under the common name ~Poison Ivy.~ Both climbing and shrub-like forms of T. radicans are common

throughout eastern North America, with similar growth forms of *T. diversilobum* confined to the coast of western North America. *Toxicodendron vernix* is confined to bogs and cooler areas of eastern North America. The effects of dermal exposure for the three species are similar. Depending upon the degree of sensitization, a pruritic erythematous and vesicular rash will develop within hours or days and may persist for up to 10 days. A linear rash distribution is particularly suggestive of *Toxicodendron* dermatitis. The treatment is largely symptomatic therapy focused on amelioration of the symptoms. Little or nothing can be done to arrest the process once the exposure has occurred. The value of scrubbing the affected area with soap and water will have no value unless instituted within minutes of the exposure. The entire plant, except the pollen, is toxic throughout the year, even during the winter months when the branches and stems are leafless.

Urushiol, a nonvolatile phenolic allergen that acts as a powerful hapten, is contained within the plant's resin canals and is released when the tissues are injured. Urushiol has as its dermatitis-producing principle pentadecylcatechol. It is estimated that 70% of the United States population would acquire *Toxicodendron* dermatitis on casual exposure to one of the three species mentioned above. Individuals sensitive to *Toxicodendron* species may exhibit cross reactions to Japanese lacquer, cashew nut trees, or mango. Contact with these or other genera in the Anacardiaceae should be avoided. The ingestion of *Toxicodendron* or herbal remedies that contain it can produce life threatening gastroenteritis. Even dermal exposure or inhalation of smoke from burning plant debris containing *Toxicodendron* can produce severe toxicity. It is a common misconception that the fluid from skin vesicles can spread the rash to other body parts or to other individuals. Medicinally, *Toxicodendron* has been used to cure eczema and shingles as well as ringworm. The sap, which turns black when exposed to air, was one of the few natural sources of black lacquer dye before the introduction of synthetic dyes.

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Speaking of folk medicine, medicinal uses of plants...I am not a biology major but have had an interest in this area for some time.

Why is it that only one person, James Duke of Dept of Agri., has made a major effort to compile comprehensive lists of medicinal plants uses?

Is it possible that modern American medicine has assumptions that run contrary to even the examination of historical and folk use?

At the least, by now, I would hope for a large d-base perhaps a CD ROM of thousands of medicinally used plants both in U.S. and abroad, something easily accessible for public search, such as Med Line.

Especially as world and American species are being eliminated so quickly.

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Here's a "preventative" method for the skin...

If you think you have been exposed, wash with hot water (as hot as you can tolerate) and Fels Naptha soap. The soap is horrible on the skin, but it has something which breaks up the oil of the poison. Also, wash the clothes in hot water immediately. The rash from poison ivy can take up to 72 hours to appear after exposure, and is often spread on the body by taking showers while the oils are still on the skin.

(The oils often stay on your hands, on the palms in the creases. You usually don't get poison on the palms because the skin is so tough, but you spread it everywhere just by touching.)

From: Ecology Center Fund
Subject: Re: poison ivy/sumack/oak
Date: 28 Apr 92 15:12:00 GMT

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Look for a product in your supermarket or outdoor goods store called Tecnu. It's nothing short of miraculous. It prevents AND alleviates the rash.

Not 100 % effective, but hey, what do you want, a perfect world? :)

-----*-----

How to recognize PI/PS/PO:

POISON IVY (*Toxicodendron radicans* = *Rhus radicans* = *Rhus toxicodendron*)
Found in a wide range of habitats, but in the midwest often seen in disturbed woods, roadsides, and flood plains. Most widespread of PI, PS, and PO.

Small, slightly woody plant, or shrubby, or vining. LEAVES ALTERNATE (= 1 leaf per node), TRIFOLIOLATE (=3 leaflets), with pedicel (leafstalk) and the CENTRAL LEAFLET WITH PETIOLULE (=leaflet stalk). The lateral two leaflets are not distinctly stalked. Leaflets are a variety of shapes, but generally ovate or obovate (roughly apple-leaf shaped). Leaflets may be smooth-edged (entire), irregularly toothed, or shallowly lobed. Leaves of one variant form looking like small oak-leaves (but look again!). Leaves apple-green and shiny in the spring, deep green and often dusty in the summer, turning a glorious reddish orange in the fall. Flowers tiny, whitish, in clusters; fruits white berries in late summer or fall.

Closest look-alike: Box-elder seedlings (*Acer negundo*), which has OPPOSITE, trifoliolate leaves; the lateral two leaflets are often slightly stalked. Older box-elders generally have 5 leaflets per leaf.

POISON SUMAC (*Toxicodendron vernix* = *Rhus vernix*) Shrub, to perhaps 15-20

ft tall, often branched from the base. LEAVES ALTERNATE WITH 7-13 LEAFLETS, lateral leaflets without a petiolule (leaflet stalk), TERMINAL LEAFLET WITH A STALK. MIDRIB OF THE LEAF WITHOUT A PAIR OF WINGS OF TISSUE THAT RUN BETWEEN LEAFLET PAIRS. More small, whitish berries in a long cluster. Usually in wetlands, Maine to Minnesota, south to Texas and Florida.

Closest look-alikes: Staghorn sumac, *Rhus typhina*, which has clusters of fuzzy, red fruits and toothed leaflets, and likes dry soils; Smooth sumac, *Rhus glabra*, with bright red fruits and slightly toothed leaves; much drier soil than PS.

POISON OAK: (*Toxicodendron diversiloba* = *Rhus diversiloba*). Reputedly the worst of the bunch. Erect shrub, usually about 3-6ft tall (to 12 ft!), bushy, with ALTERNATE LEAVES OF THREE LEAFLETS, the LEAFLETS generally lobed slightly or as much as an oak leaf; CENTRAL LEAFLET STALKED. Leaves generally bright, shiny green above, paler below. Fruits are small whitish berries. Common on the west coast, esp. low places, thickets and wooded slopes. Occasionally a 5-leafleted form is found.

Kay Klier Biology Dept UNI

=====
Ron Rushing
Technology Coordinator
Stephen F. Austin State University
Nacogdoches, TX

f_rushingrg

Disclaimer: "Its alright-- Its only me"

Newsgroups: rec.gardens

Subject: Re: Poison ivy

From: Ron

Date: 21 May 94 21:15:12 CST

=====

Poison Ivy

Contact with poison ivy can leave you with a rash and persistent itch. This native perennial grows throughout Virginia, in woods, fields, and sometimes in the garden. It grows in sun or shade, and in wet or dry places. Its growth habit depends on where it is growing, resulting in a trailing ground cover, free-standing shrub, or a vine supported by trees, shrubbery and fences.

All parts of the poison ivy plant contain an oil, urushiol, which causes the allergic reaction. Most poisoning occur during the growing season when the presence of lush foliage increases the chance of contact, but the dormant stems and roots of the vine can cause winter poisoning as well. Individuals vary in their sensitivity to poison ivy, but repeated exposure can lead to increased sensitivity. It would be a good idea for everyone to avoid this plant.

Poison ivy appears in many forms. The leaflets vary in size, glossiness, and marginal notching, but always occur in groups of three. If you avoid all unknown plants with leaves composed of three leaflets, you will be playing it safe.

Poison ivy is difficult but not impossible to eradicate. The chief difficulty lies in the chances of becoming poisoned when trying to remove it. Wear protective clothing, including gloves, whenever you are working near it. Pulling and grubbing are effective means of removal, though they necessitate close contact and will probably need to be repeated once or twice for complete control. If time is not an object, the vines can be smothered by completely covering them with black plastic for several months. Do not mow the plants as this will spew bits and pieces of poisonous material over the area. When removing poison ivy, take frequent breaks to change clothes and scrub thoroughly with a strong soap. Wash contaminated clothing separately. DO NOT BURN any plants that you physically remove. The resulting smoke can cause severe lung damage if inhaled.

Herbicides are effective and allow you to control the plant without getting too close to it. Several commercial products are available. Check labels to find one that will control poison ivy, and apply it as directed. Many of the herbicides for poison ivy control contain glyphosate. This chemical is systemic. It is absorbed by leaves and transferred to stems and roots, and slowly causes the death of the entire plant. It must be applied to an actively growing plant for this process to take place; do not apply it during a drought when even poison ivy will not be growing. Glyphosate, like most herbicides labelled for poison ivy removal, is nonselective and will kill any other plants it contacts.

Where poison ivy has grown up tree trunks or into hedges, cut the vine at ground level. Remove as much of the stump and roots as you can with a hoe or by pulling. As regrowth occurs, apply an herbicide to the leaves, or keep pulling up the growth. With perseverance, and probably of few itches, poison ivy can be controlled.

=====

Ron Rushing
Technology Coordinator
Stephen F. Austin State University
Nacogdoches, TX
f_rushingr
Disclaimer: "Its alright-- Its only me"

From: london
Newsgroups: alt.med.allergy
Subject: Treatment for poison ivy outbreaks.
Date: 21 May 1994 16:25:20 GMT
Keywords: jewelweed, aloe vera, goldenseal, comfrey, plantain leaves
-

Combinations of the following herbal remedies could be tried:

Apply to the lesions, more or less in this order:

- 1) squeeze juice of fresh jewelweed plants onto lesions
and reserve remains of plants for application as a compress
[this will help reduce itching - the other herbs listed here may
also help with this]
- 2) squeeze juice of aloe vera onto lesions and reserve remains of plants
for compress; promotes healing
- 3) liberally dust powdered goldenseal on top of the above plant juices
before they dry onto the lesions; this will promote rapid healing
- 4) take a wooden meat maul and mash leaves and stems of the following

plants:

comfrey

plantain leaves

the remains of the jewelweed and aloe plants juiced in previous procedure

form the resulting masses into a poultice or compress and apply it on top of the goldenseal on the lesions

hold poultice in place with a bandage of some sort, if possible.

After four hours or so remove poultice and clean the lesions with water.

-

Repeat this entire procedure every four hours as needed until itching is reduced and lesions begin to heal.

-

Other remedies:

Cortisone (some OTC, some prescription)

Witch Hazel

--*--

london

-

Miscellaneous treatment information:

-

Newsgroups: rec.backcountry

From: Greg Smith <greg.

Subject: Re: poison ivy!

Date: Mon, 16 May 1994 13:22:01 GMT

Poison_Oak_Ivy_2004.txt

>Common H2O will neutralize the poison ivy, if you rinse before
>it becomes irritated. If you suspect that you've hit a patch
>of the stuff, just rinse off the exposed areas with a little
>warm water.

Agreed that water is good but please DON'T USE WARM WATER. Warm water will open the pores in your skin allowing the (poison ivy) oil to get in. Use cold water and soap.

To give you an idea of how the oil behaves on your skin, consider what happened to me. On military exercise, I got into some poison ivy in an ugly way. I knew I had about 2 hours to do something or I would certainly die a horrible itchy death.

I doused my arms in rubbing alcohol to remove the oil from my hands and arms. What I forgot to think about was that the dissolved oil was running down my arms to my elbows where the alcohol was evaporating and redepositing now concentrated poison ivy oil. Within a day I had no skin on my elbows.

No matter what you decide to do to, just remember that the oil has to be removed completely or neutralized in place. There is a product called Tecnu that works wonders. Telephone linemen swear by it.

BTW: I think calamine lotion is worthless.

Greg Smith
AT&T Global Information Solutions
greg.n.smith

Opinions expressed don't necessarily reflect
the views or policies of AT&T

Poison_Oak_Ivy_2004.txt

Newsgroups: rec.backcountry
From: rperkins
Subject: Re: poison ivy!
Date: Thu, 19 May 1994 21:13:23 GMT

I have a great case on my lower legs right now, and have been very allergic since age 7 (crawled into a poison sumac bush wearing swimming trunks. The stuff covered 80% of my body.)

I've tried various steroid creams:
1% hydrocortisone works okay. .5% is useless.
"Triamcinalone" steroid cream works better- prescription.

"Hydroxine HCL 25mg" - prescription- three times a day cuts the itching but makes you woozy, esp.if you drink a beer. Don't know if it is an antihistamine. Anyone out there know?

Max strength sinutab has acetaminophen analgesic, pseudoephedrine (sudafed?) decongestant, and chlorpheniramine maleate antihistamine. The antihistamine and analgesic make me feel better, though tired. Any antihistamine should do something to cut the itching.

And, wackiest symptom reliever of all:
Fill the tub w/ cool water. add 1/2 chlorine bleach, 4 tablespoons salt. soak for 10 minutes. seems to help. Came upon this after having symptoms relieved after swimming in the ocean or in a swimming pool.

calamine lotion dries it out just a little. 95% useless.

i keep a bottle of rubbing alcohol in my car *usually* in case i think i've been exposed.

Rob
ESN 294-7632 Commercial 919-991-7632

Poison_Oak_Ivy_2004.txt

AIN/SSP Development, Dept 3C38
Bell Northern Research, 35 Davis Drive, RTP, NC 27709
The opinions I opine are purely mine; BNR doesn't share them.

From: tamada
Newsgroups: rec.backcountry
Subject: Re: poison ivy!
Date: 17 May 1994 13:49:50 -0700

>(Jason Russell Dalton) writes:
>>Common H2O will neutralize the poison ivy, if you rinse before
>>it becomes irritated. If you suspect that you've hit a patch
>>of the stuff, just rinse off the exposed areas with a little
>>warm water.

I react strongly to poison oak. So strongly that I had to go to a doctor last time. I eventually saw an allergist who gave me a copy of a pamphlet (I don't know who printed it) which advised the following:

Rinse as soon as possible (everyone agrees on this).

Use a LOT of COLD water. Be aware that this water is simply spreading the oil around; the idea is to use enough water to have it spread off you entirely.

As someone else mentioned, hot water opens the pores and allows more oil to get in.

The pamphlet didn't mention soap one way or the other; possibly it was referring to people caught in the field who didn't have access to soap.

The doctor said that to use a little water was probably worse than to do nothing at all, because it would simply spread the oil over more of your skin.

--Mike Tamada

Occidental College
tamada

Newsgroups: rec.backcountry
From: hlindaue
Subject: Re: poison ivy! (Poison Oak)
Date: Thu, 19 May 1994 00:19:52 GMT

I used to just wait until I was finished hiking, and then use Teknu, and shower off. [text deleted] prescribe some Prednisone and Atarax, [text deleted]
The one good thing about all of this is that I found out (too late, of course!) that Tecnu also makes a product called Armor, which you put on before exposure, and which prevents the oils from soaking into your skin. I bought two bottles. The doctor yesterday told me to carry alcohol and some paper towels, so that if I get exposed, I can immediately wipe off any oils.

Hans Lindauer
hlindaue

Newsgroups: rec.backcountry
From: tonya
Subject: Re: poison ivy!
Date: Tue, 17 May 1994 20:47:48 GMT

>>Does anyone have any good cures for poison Ivy.
>Patience and Calamine lotion. It will dry up eventually. A few years ago I
>had a case that got out of hand and a dr. gave me a prescription for a drug
>called prednisone. He said it was a type of steroid. After taking that stuff
>it is no wonder to me that the muscleheads who take steroids slam their heads
>into walls and grunt a lot. Talk about wired. It cleared up my poison ivy
>in about 24 hours, but I was very unhappy for the week I had to take that

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>stuff. I get poison every spring and find that once you have it, it will run
>it's course in about a week - so just don't scratch!

> - Keith

Newsgroups: rec.backcountry

From: robert.samuelson

Subject: Re: poison ivy!

Keywords: jewelweed

Date: Tue, 24 May 1994 14:03:02 GMT

>>I am extremely sensitive to poison oak and have found an inexpensive and
>>simple method for relief/cure.

>>

>>1 - Mix up a slurry of rubbing alcohol and Comet Cleanser

>>2 - Apply it to the affected area

>>3 - Scrub it around until the skin is well scoured (skin turns pink)

>>4 - Allow skin to heal

>>5 - Don't go back to the area where you made contact with the damn

>> stuff!

>>

>>Relief from the itching after step 3 is fairly fast (as I remember it

>>was less than a day).

The native americans used Jewelweed. They would smash it into a pulp and spread the pulp over the affected area. Jewelweed is usually found in moist, shaded areas and is identified by it's waxy leaves. After a rain or heavy dew, water beads up on the waxy leaves and looks like jewels.

Rob Samuelson

Poison_Oak_Ivy_2004.txt

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E-mail... Robert.

Expressed opinions don't necessarily reflect those of AT&T.

Newsgroups: alt.med.allergy
From: carveb
Subject: Poison Oak/Ivy
Date: Tue, 24 May 1994 15:56:29 GMT

I picked up a product recently that is supposed to alliviate symptoms of poison oak, ivy, sumac. I haven't needed it yet so i can not verify it works. It's called "Easy Ivy". It's made by Bethrum Reasearch and Development and their address is P.O. Box 3436 Galveston, TX 77552. Has anyone out there tried this stuff?

--

carveb
Bob Carver
Dallas, TX

From: vikikirk
Newsgroups: rec.gardens
Subject: Re: Herbal treatment of poison ivy rashes.
Date: 25 May 1994 07:06:28 -0400

I spent a night in a poison ivy patch with ten others who are also sensitive to poison ivy. I was on an Outward Bound trip in the NC mountains. We had been hiking mountainous terrain until well into the the night when we came upon a nice flat camp spot -- unfortunately infested

Poison_Oak_Ivy_2004.txt

with the stuff. Our leaders told us to rub the juice from a fibrous plant on our skin -- Jewel Weed. Luckily there was plenty of it. Not one of us got a rash from the poison ivy!

Viki

Article 33840 of rec.gardens:

Path:

bigblue.oit.unc.edu!concert!gatech!howland.reston.ans.net!wupost!bigfoot.wustl.edu!mulberry!nedehn

From: nedehn

Newsgroups: rec.gardens

Subject: Re.Poison Ivy

Date: 22 May 1994 15:58:08 GMT

Organization: College of Arts and Sciences -- Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Lines: 22

Message-ID: <2rnveg\$i12

NNTP-Posting-Host: mulberry.wustl.edu

X-Newsreader: TIN [version 1.2 PL2]

Regarding reactions and treatment: Not everyone is lucky enough to get off with a rash. A serious exposure or strong sensitivity will produce flu-like symptoms--fever, achyness, etc.. It's possible to be sick as a dog for more than a month--believe me, I know!! I also developed additional spontaneous rashes on unexposed portions of my body, weeks after the initial outbreak--my immune system had developed a hair-trigger sensitivity. I was told some of this might have been prevented had they started oral steroids immediately (another thing to note--not every site of exposure will show up at once--and I'm not talking about secondary exposure from touching oneself, though I got that too--all over my neck and face! But it was more than a week before all the streaks of blisters

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appeared on my legs, which had clearly brushed up against the plant).
In my case the situation is now clear. But for all of you
as-yet-unexposed people out there--should you ever be so unlucky as to
meet the dreaded plant, be aware that stronger reactions are possible and
stronger treatment is available. Don't be shy about going to see your
doctor--just 'cause the books don't usually mention it doesn't mean you're
imagining your illness :)

--Natasha

Article 33932 of rec.gardens:
Newsgroups: rec.gardens
Path:
bigblue.oit.unc.edu!concert!gatech!howland.reston.ans.net!newserver.jvnc.net!ya
le.edu!noc.near.net!atria.com!argon!scd
From: scd
Subject: Re: poison ivy (help! help!)
Message-ID: <Cqo26w.CG2
Sender: news
Nntp-Posting-Host: argon.atria.com
Organization: Atria Software, Inc.
X-Newsreader: TIN [version 1.2 PL0]
References: <2s8uqa\$1q2
Date: Tue, 31 May 1994 12:18:31 GMT
Lines: 37

Babs Woods (babs) wrote:

: We have discovered, to our deep, itchy, dismay that we have
: poison ivy on our yard. So far we seem to have seen it before anyone
: has been exposed. Both of us react *badly* to it and we have a small

Poison_Oak_Ivy_2004.txt

: child who hasn't been exposed yet. In the event that the RoundUp and
: another more broad herbicide we've used in different spots doesn't kill
: it DEADEADEAD, what should we then try? I'm not sure I'd like the
: blowtorch approach because of the smoke, some of the ivy is in
: with other weeds and the whole area could also catch fire.

: Should we lay in a good supply of disposable HazMat Suits and
: just keep fighting??

I am currently working on killing my bumper crop of PI. I am using Orthro
Brush-be-gone. The first application has had dramatic effects! I'm
expecting to give one more application (I mix the product in a 6oz/24oz
ratio in a small spray bottle and then spray it on the leaves).

You can remove the vines by hand and then use the chemicals on the "stump"
of the vine, but this means rubber gloves et. al. and disposal of the
unwanted vines.

Now, whatever you do, DO NOT burn PI (or anything similar). Contrary to
other posts, you do not need to be sensitive to PI to have a severe reaction
to the smoke. Inhaled allergens are usually nothing to worry about and
usually do not cause a reaction, however PI smoke is no longer an allergen by
normal definitions. It is VERY easy to develop analphalyxis when you breath
this in. Death can ensue in 10 to 30 minutes if you breath enough of it
and you are very young/old or have a medical history of asthma or allergies.
Also, breathing this in will almost certainly cause you to develop a
hypersensitivity to PI and other similar plants that will stay with you the
rest of your life.

Regards,
Steve

--