

Safe Houseplants for Kids and Pets

Houseplants are a great way to add a little green to your home and even help improve your air quality, but if you have little ones, some plants are safer choices than others. If you want to spruce up your home without the worry, follow this basic checklist.

Do: Choose plants that are safe. Good choices that pose very little risk include Christmas Cactus, Boston Fern, African Violet, and Spider Plants. **Do:** Keep any plant, even ones that are considered safe, out of reach of children. Any plant can be dangerous if your child decides to eat it.

Do: Know the signs of an allergic reaction. Some plants are not toxic but can cause an allergic reaction like a skin rash or hives. A severe allergic reaction may cause trouble breathing. Call 911 right away if you think your child is having trouble breathing. If your child has an allergic reaction and you suspect a plant is the cause, remove the plant and talk to your child's healthcare provider about allergy testing.

Do: Keep the number for poison control in a handy place for quick reference if needed. The number of the National Poison Control Center is 800-222-1222.

Do Not: Assume that a popular houseplant is completely safe for your child. Some common houseplants like dieffenbachia, elephant ear, calla lilies and the holiday favorite poinsettia, can have a mildly toxic sap which may irritate sensitive skin. And some lilies may cause upset stomach if eaten.

Do Not: Keep naturally toxic or poisonous plants in your home. These include Oleander, Allamanda, and Desert Rose and can make your child very sick.

Bringing a little green from the outside in, can make your house a home. To keep your child safe in their home, remember this checklist when choosing houseplants.