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Nightshade plant (includes woody, black or common types)

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Woody Nightshade



Black or Common Nightshade



Woody nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*) and black or common nightshade (*Solanum nigrum*)

- **Woody nightshade** is a perennial vine often seen sprawling over other plants. Flowers have 5 purple petals with a yellow stamen. Berries are red and hang in stemmed clusters.
- **Black or common nightshade** is a perennial shrub, which grows erect. It has 5 white petals with a yellow stamen and black berries that grow in stemmed clusters.
- DO NOT confuse these plants with deadly nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*), a toxic plant that causes different symptoms.

Is it toxic?

Unripe berries, leaves and stems contain a compound called solanine. Ingestion of small amounts may cause a burning sensation in the throat and a stomach upset. Similar symptoms may occur after eating green potatoes. Ingestion of larger amounts may cause more serious symptoms.

Health Effects:

Ingestion: Ingestion of only a few **unripe berries** may result in burning sensation of the throat, a bitter taste, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhea. Ingestion of large amounts may cause headache, drowsiness, confusion, dilated pupils and increased heart rate. **Ripe berries** do not cause these effects.

What to do?

Ingestion: Rinse out the mouth and have a glass of water. **Contact the Poison Control Centre.**

Depending on the amount ingested, **referral to a hospital may be recommended.**

How can I prevent exposure? Do not eat wild berries. Know the name of the plants and berries in your backyard.

Need more information: Contact the Poison Control Centre.

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