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# Laburnum

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**Laburnum or golden chain** (*Laburnum anagyroides*, *Laburnum alpinum*): A popular shrub or small tree seen in parks and gardens. Bright yellow flowers hang in drooping clusters about 4-12 inches long. Silky-haired pods contain flat dark-brown seeds. Young children can mistake the seedpods for edible peapods.

**Is it toxic?** All parts contain a compound called cytisine. Ingestion of small amounts of seeds or flowers can cause a stomach upset and salivation. Serious toxicity is rare but can result after ingestion of large amounts.

#### **Health Effects:**

**Ingestion:** Symptoms usually begin within 1 hour but may be delayed if the seeds are swallowed whole. Nausea, vomiting and salivation are common symptoms after ingestion of the seedpods or flowers. Diarrhea and abdominal cramps may also be seen. Ingestion of large amounts may cause drowsiness, headache, confusion and an elevated heart rate.

#### **What to do?**

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

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

**How can I prevent exposure?** Supervise young children when playing outdoors.

**Need more information:** Contact the Poison Control Centre.

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#### **Keywords:**

plants: cytisine

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