

POISON IVY

When poison ivy sap comes into contact with skin, the urushiol (pronounced oo-roo-shee-oh!) oil in the sap can cause a horrible, itchy, painful rash. Learn how to identify this pernicious plant!

Examples of poison ivy rash



What part of the poison ivy plant causes your skin to break out into a rash?

What is the chemical name of this irritating oil?

Read this rhyme. It was created to help people remember how to identify poison ivy- and stay away from it! Poison ivy will NOT kill you, unless you are silly enough to eat it, but the rash is no fun at all!

Match each part of the rhyme to the words that retell it. THEN match the words to the picture it describes.

**Leaves of three,
Let it be!**

**Poison ivy has
groups of 3
leaves.**



**Longer middle stem,
Stay away from them!**

**Poison ivy can
climb up trees.**



**Hairy vine,
no friend of mine!
Raggy rope?
Don't be a dope!**

**Poison ivy has
berries in the
fall and winter.**



**Berries white,
Danger in sight!**

**Poison ivy has a
long middle stem,
but very short
stems to the side**



What should you do if you think you have touched or brushed against a poison ivy plant? You should wash your hands with soap as soon as possible! Don't wait more than 8 minutes!

Think about how poison ivy causes a rash. Why would washing your hands soon after touching it prevent the rash?



If you develop a rash, it will probably last 2 or 3 weeks. If it bothers you, a cool bath might help soothe your skin. You can add baking soda or oatmeal to the water to help.

You can also put calamine lotion on the rash. It is made from a powdered mineral named calamine. It will reduce the itching and help dry out the rash.



Is poison ivy contagious? No! Well, mostly no. If a person still has some of the poison ivy sap on their body, tools, or clothes and you touch them, your skin will be irritated by the urushiol, and you may get a rash. However, you cannot get poison ivy by touching another person's rash or being near them.

Show what you know!
Use the paragraphs above to finish the sentences.

People get an itchy rash when the _____ from the poison ivy plant gets on their skin. The sticky substance contains a chemical called _____ which irritates the skin and causes the rash. Poison ivy _____ (is/is not) contagious.

The poison ivy rash lasts about 2 to 3 _____. To reduce the itching, you can soak in a cool _____. You can also put _____ or _____ in the water. Another treatment is to put _____ lotion on the rash. This lotion will reduce the _____ and help dry out the _____.