



## WHY CAT OWNERS SHOULD AVOID LILIES

### **Are all lilies poisonous to cats?**

Plants to watch out for include Easter lilies, Day lilies, Tiger lilies, and Stargazer lilies (all members of the *Lilium* and *Hermerocallis* genera). Other plants with 'lily' in the name, such as peace lily (*Spathiphyllum*) or lily-of-the-valley (*Convallaria*), do not cause the kidney injury associated with these other lilies, although some of these plants are toxic in their own right (e.g., *Convallaria* is toxic to the heart).

### **What parts of the lily are poisonous?**

All parts of the lily - including the stem, leaves, petals, stamens and pollen - are poisonous to cats. Even minor exposures (cat chewing on a leaf or getting pollen on his or her haircoat or whiskers) can be fatal.



### **What are the acute signs of lily poisoning in cats?**

Many cats vomit after chewing or eating parts of a lily. However, if a cat has been exposed to a lily outdoors, the family may be unaware of the exposure.

### **Can my cat die from exposure to a lily?**

Cats are exquisitely sensitive to lily poisoning. While the exact toxin is still unidentified, cats that do not get prompt treatment develop acute renal failure and die, generally within 3-6 days afterwards. Cats with acute renal failure typically have vomiting, depression, partial or complete loss of appetite and dehydration. Blood tests show increases in blood urea nitrogen (BUN), creatinine, phosphorous and potassium. The urine contains casts, protein, glucose and is very dilute.

### **My cat may have been exposed to a toxic lily. What should I do?**

Cats who have been seen near lilies, as well as those who have definitely ingested any part of a lily, should be seen by a veterinarian immediately. Cats who are treated within 18 hours of exposure to a toxic lily usually recover. However, in cases where treatment is delayed for 3-4 days, the prognosis is generally poor and most cats are euthanized.

### **What to expect at the vet?**

If ingestion is recent, the vet will likely perform decontamination (may involve inducing vomiting, flushing of stomach and giving activated charcoal to remove as much poison as possible). They will also support the kidneys with intravenous fluids while monitoring kidney function.