

LEAVES OF THREE, LET THEM BE:

Navigating Poison Ivy with ease and expertise!

Spring is here, and we're all eager to get outside! While enjoying the nice weather, whether walking new trails or working in the yard, there is a chance some of us may encounter poison ivy. It seemingly lurks everywhere, and can cause itchy, painful rashes.

Here are some helpful tips to help you spot, handle, and avoid this pesky plant, ensuring you can enjoy the outdoors itch-free this spring season.



1. Leaf Characteristics:

Poison ivy typically has three shiny green leaflets clustered together on a single stem. The leaves may have smooth or serrated edges and can vary in size.

2. "Leaves of Three, Let them Be":

A three-leaf arrangement is a good way to start identifying poison ivy. Avoid touching any plant displaying this leaf pattern.

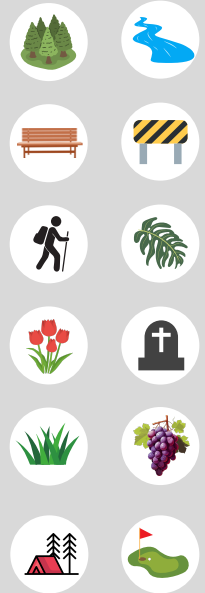
3. Color and Growth Habit:

In spring, poison ivy leaves may appear reddish or bronze before turning green as the season progresses. The plant can grow as a vine, climbing trees and structures, or as a low shrub.

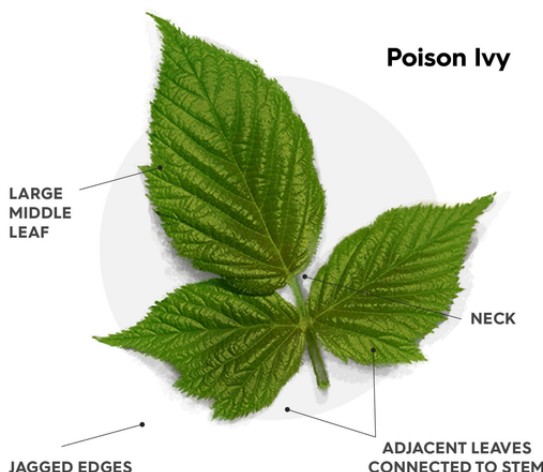
Where does poison ivy live?

Here's some common places where it may be found:

- Forests/Woodlands
- Parks/nature reserves (even city parks!)
- Trails/hiking paths
- Gardens/landscaping areas
- Yards, fields, meadows
- Riverbanks, streams, creeks
- Vacant lots, ditches, roadsides, and construction sites
- Arboretums/botanical gardens
- Cemeteries
- Orchards/vineyards
- Campgrounds/picnic areas
- Playgrounds, golf courses, and sports fields



*These are just some of the many places poison ivy can be found.



WHAT DO I DO?

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1. Avoid Direct Contact:

Prevention is the best defense against poison ivy. When working outdoors, wear long sleeves, pants, gloves, and closed-toe shoes to minimize skin exposure. Consider using barrier creams or protective clothing treated with urushiol-blocking agents.

2. Be Vigilant and Stay Informed:

Stay vigilant while gardening, hiking, or exploring wooded areas. Teach children and family members to recognize poison ivy and to avoid touching unfamiliar plants.

3. Take Prompt Action:

If you encounter poison ivy, act quickly to minimize the spread of “urushiol”, the oily resin that causes the allergic reaction. Wash the affected area with soap and cool water as soon as possible, ideally within 10-15 minutes of exposure.

Why should you visit a St. Luke's Urgent Care Center for poison ivy?

1. Prompt treatment:

Our urgent care centers offer timely medical attention, allowing you to receive treatment promptly after exposure to poison ivy. Quick intervention can help mitigate the severity of symptoms and prevent complications.

2. Access to medical professionals:

St. Luke's Urgent Care Centers are staffed with RNs, Nurse Practitioners, and Physicians, who are trained to diagnose and treat allergic reactions like poison ivy rash.

3. Symptom management:

Our centers can provide guidance on managing symptoms such as itching, inflammation, and blistering. Our staff may recommend over-the-counter remedies or prescribe medications to relieve discomfort and expedite recovery.

4. Prevent complications:

While most cases of poison ivy rash can be managed at home, infections and allergic reactions are certainly possible.

5. Peace of mind:

If you're unsure about the severity of your reaction or if you have pre-existing health conditions that could complicate recovery, visiting an urgent care center can provide reassurance and peace of mind. Our staff will evaluate your condition and offer personalized recommendations for treatment.

Seeking medical attention at a St. Luke's Urgent Care Center for poison ivy can help speed your recovery, alleviate symptoms, and ensure proper management of any complications that may arise.

Most of our centers are open daily 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and on holidays! Walk-ins are welcome or you can check-in online [here](#). If you need us, come see us!

