



Your Information Resource for Poison Ivy, Oak and Sumac

Volume 5, Issue 3

Welcome to the Zanfel Zone! We would like to wish you a Happy Thanksgiving! As always, Zanfel is here to provide you with important information on plant identification, prevention, and treatment.



Working Around Poison Ivy and Poison Oak

Tips for reducing exposures and misery:

1. Plant Identification. In the US there are two species of poison ivy and two species of poison oak. The shape of the plants' leaves can vary widely from one place to the next. Be suspicious of any climbing vine that uses aerial roots to attach to trees. (For free copies of Zanfel's education resources on plant ID, please click on the "Want To Learn More" link)
2. Remember that all parts of the plant are toxic. The plants' toxin, urushiol, is an oil that is found not only in the leaves, but also in the vines, aerial roots, stems, and roots. Running a chainsaw through a poison ivy vine can spray your skin and clothing with the plants' rash inducing oil.
3. Post Exposure Prevention: It only takes about 60 minutes for urushiol oil to completely absorb into the skin. If exposure is suspected, wash the exposed skin ASAP with soap and cool water to remove as much unabsorbed urushiol as possible. If it has been more than 60 minutes, the urushiol is already in your skin and "**regular**" soap and water is no longer effective.

Time of Washing After Exposure	Extent of Removal of Poison Ivy Oil (%)
Immediately	100
10 min	50
15 min	25
30 min	10
60 min	None

Zanfel is an effective post-exposure preventative. Zanfel removes the urushiol that has already bonded with the skin, thereby either preventing, or reducing the severity of the reaction.

4. Rash treatment: Zanfel is the only product clinically shown to remove urushiol from the skin, anytime after outbreak of the rash. For most mild to moderate reactions, the use of Zanfel completely stops the itching, and puts the body in a position to heal the rash. Zanfel allows the poison ivy/oak affected employee to quickly return to work in an itch free and healing state. For severe or systemic cases, Zanfel can be used in conjunction with prescription steroid

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medications.

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Poison Ivy Plants Growing Where?

Earlier this fall, Zanfel Laboratories attended the Boy Scouts of America's National Outdoor Conference at the Philmont Scout Ranch near Cimmaron, New Mexico. Northwestern New Mexico's ecosystems are as varied, as they are enchanting. While we passed through grasslands, mountainous pine forests, and desert shrublands, the last thing we thought we would find in this relatively dry region was poison ivy.

Much to our surprise, we saw plenty of poison ivy in places where there was adequate surface water.



Western poison ivy (*Toxicodendron rydbergii*) near the Cimmaron River. Cimmaron Canyon State Park, NM. Elevation 7,500 feet. Poison ivy was easy to find here, as it was the only shrub whose leaves had changed colors.



Western poison ivy on the banks of the Rio Grande River, near Embudo, NM. Elevation 6,028 feet.

Collecting Firewood For The Winter

While collecting firewood for the winter, be sure to inspect the wood pile for the presence of poison ivy vines that may have gotten mixed in. A section of a poison ivy vine may even cling to an individual piece of wood. If you see a vine with hairy looking roots in your woodpile, be sure to carefully remove it and the pieces of wood it was touching. Removing wood that has been contaminated with the plants' toxic oil will save you from a miserable wintertime case of poison ivy.



The poison ivy toxin, urushiol, is stable at high temperatures, and the plant particles dispersed in the smoke are both allergenic and irritant. There is at least one case where a person has died from respiratory distress after inhaling the smoke of burning poison ivy. So keep poison ivy out of the fireplace - your family and neighbors will appreciate it!

Gealt L, Osterhoudt K, Adult Respiratory Distress Syndrome After Smoke Inhalation From Burning Poison Ivy. JAMA 1995; 274 (4): 358 - 359

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We'll Tweet helpful information on poison ivy, oak, and sumac throughout the year. Thank you to everyone who has followed us!

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