



## Spring's Four Common Hazards to Cats

Spring-time brings more pleasant weather, flowers and blossoming trees. It also brings "Spring fever" as cats want to go outside...or perhaps sample those beautiful flowers and plants you've brought into the house!

No one likes to associate Spring with hazards, but as a cat owner, it's always helpful to understand the four most common hazards to your cats and other animals:

### So Beautiful, but So Toxic ... Plants

While many of the plants that we commonly keep in our gardens are beautiful to look at, these same plants can be poisonous to your cats. Many of us bring these cut the flowers for bouquets: Lilies are one the most common poisonous plants found in bouquets and in gardens, but there are many other types of plants that can be poisonous to our dogs and cats as well. Rhododendrons, azaleas, Japanese ewe, foxglove, tulips, oleanders, castor beans, chrysanthemums and many other types of plants can all be very toxic to unsuspecting curious cats and other pets. If you have a vegetable garden, make sure you don't have any of the plants from the nightshade family where the cats can get to them (that includes tomatoes and eggplants).



### You Don't Need to Poison Your Yard...or Your Cats!

Every home owner wants the greenest yard in the neighborhood, but if you use fertilizers and insecticides on your lawn and/or garden/plants, you run the risk of exposing your cat(s) and other pet(s) to toxic poisons. Even if they don't go outside, you can bring it into the house on your shoes, and then they pick it up on their paws. There are many organic fertilizers, flea and other insecticide solutions, and yard treatments that you can buy at your local garden shops. Nematodes are one of the best solutions for fleas, fire ants and mosquitoes (see below).

### Fleas, Ticks and Mosquitoes...Oh My!

Spring is also the time of year when fleas, ticks, mosquitoes and other parasites populations increase...and like to find new homes on your cats and other pets. Not only are they a nuisance, but they can carry disease. Cats also can get heartworms from mosquitoes, so make sure you don't let any water outside become stagnant. If it does, put vinegar in the water to kill the larvae.



Diseases such as Lyme disease, ehrlichiosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, and many others can be transmitted by ticks. Fleas can transmit diseases such as tapeworms, cat scratch fever (to people), and even bubonic plague.

Nematodes can be sprayed on your yard to kill fleas, mosquito larva and fire ants (another hazard if you live where their mounds can quickly grow after rains). They are non-toxic microscopic worms that eat the larvae and fleas/ants. Inside the house, you can use cedar beds and also put down diatomaceous earth to kill fleas. You can learn more about that online.

### Can Cats Sneeze?! Ah...choo!

Just like people, cats can have allergies too! Not only from fleas and other parasites, but from plants, and blooming trees! They can start to scratch, lose hair, have runny eyes, and oh yes, sneeze! If you have any questions, call your vet.

### Pet Insurance for Peace of Mind

Having pet insurance can help you have peace of mind in case you do have an emergency and need to visit your vet. Embrace Pet Insurance offers a range of solutions from your kitten to your older cat. Don't wait for an emergency to happen...get your cat or kitten insured today!

Always keep the Pet Poison Hotline handy - <http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com/> in case you have questions.