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# Elderberry

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**Elderberry - *Sambucus cerulea* (blue berry) and *Sambucus racemosa* (red berry):** A deciduous shrub or small tree with oblong leaves. The red or blue berries grow in clusters and have 3-5 smooth seeds. The **cooked berries** are considered edible and are used for jams and jellies.

**Is it toxic?** The uncooked berries, leaves, twigs and seeds contain a cyanogenic compound. Ingestion may cause nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Large amounts may cause lethargy, dizziness and drowsiness. Toxicity is not expected with ingestion of the **cooked berries**.

## Health Effects:

**Ingestion:** Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea may occur. Ingestion of large amounts may cause weakness and dizziness. Poisoning is not expected with ingestion of the **cooked berries**.

## What to do?

**Ingestion:** Drink a glass of water or milk. **If vomiting or diarrhea occurs, ensure a good fluid replacement. Contact the Poison Control Centre.**

**How can I prevent exposure?** Cook berries thoroughly and strain out seeds before eating. Know the name of the plants and berries in your yard.

**Need more information:** Call the Poison Control Centre.

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## Keywords:

plants: cyanogenic glycoside

We are grateful to all the First Nations who have cared for and nurtured the lands and waters around us for all time, including the xʔmʔʔkʔʔyʔʔm (Musqueam), Skʔwxʔwuʔ7mesh Uʔxwumixw (Squamish Nation), and sʔlʔilwʔtaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation) on whose unceded and ancestral territory our centre is located.

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