

Poison Ivy, Sumac & Oak

What can one do about Poison Ivy, Sumac & Oak Reactions?

Prevention is the best cure. If you are going to be in areas where there are poisonous plants, wear long pants, gloves and boots. The poisonous plants have an oily resin – *urushiol* – that sticks to almost any surface, including pet's fur, which causes a reaction on the skin.

How are poison Ivy, Sumac & Oak rashes treated?

First, wash all exposed areas with cold running water to deactivate the *urushiol*, soap is not required, and may even spread the *urushiol* to other parts of the body. Since *urushiol* can be active for months, it is important to handle the exposed clothing as little as possible, and to wash all clothing, sporting or camping gear thoroughly after an exposure. If you do develop a rash, avoid scratching the blisters, as your fingernails may spread the rash (while the fluid from the blisters will not spread the rash).

You may utilize cool showers, oatmeal baths or over the counter cortisone creams to help lessen the discomfort. If the rash is severe, your dermatologist may prescribe a steroid cream.

If you have any further questions please call the Dermatology Clinic of Idaho at (208) 939-4599 or (208) 376-4776