Most cat owners don’t know it, but lilies are lethally toxic to cats. In fact, they’re so poisonous that a cat can suffer fatal kidney failure just from biting into a lily leaf or petal, licking lily pollen from its paws, or drinking water from a vase with cut lilies in it.

All members of the *Lilium* group produce a chemical—present in all parts of the plant—that can damage cat kidneys, but Easter lilies, stargazer lilies, and Asiatic lilies seem to be the most hazardous. (Calla lilies and peace lilies are not of the *Lilium* group, and are harmless to cats.)

Some cats appear to be more susceptible than others to lily toxicity, and the severity of the resulting kidney failure also varies from cat to cat. Some poisoned cats recover with minimal therapy, while others require costly dialysis to live long enough for the kidneys to repair themselves. Many cats never recover kidney function following lily toxicity, and die or are euthanized within days of becoming ill.

If you think your cat may have chewed on or ingested lily, don’t wait for signs of illness—seek veterinary care immediately.

If you live with cats, keep lilies out of your home!