

# TOXIC WOODS

## and How They Affect Your Health



WOOD SPECIES	REACTION	PART OF BODY	POTENCY	SOURCE	OCCURS
<b>Bald Cypress</b>	sensitivity	respiratory	+	dust	rare
<b>Balsam Fir</b>	sensitivity	eyes, respiratory	+	leaves, bark	common
<b>Beech</b>	sensitivity,	eyes, skin	++	dust, leaves, bark	common
	nasopharyngeal cancer	nose, throat	?	dust	unknown
<b>Birch</b>	sensitivity	respiratory	++	dust, wood	common
<b>Black Locust</b>	irritation	eyes, skin	+++	leaves, bark	common
<b>Blackwood</b>	sensitivity	eyes, skin	++	dust, wood	common
<b>Boxwood</b>	sensitivity	eyes, skin	++	dust, wood	common
<b>Cashew</b>	sensitivity	eyes, skin	+	dust, wood	rare
<b>Cocobolo</b>	sensitivity, irritation	eyes, skin, respiratory	+++	dust, wood	common
<b>Dahoma</b>	irritation	eyes, skin	++	dust, wood	common
<b>Ebony</b>	sensitivity, irritation	eyes, skin	++	dust, wood	common
<b>Elm</b>	irritation	eyes, skin	+	dust	rare
<b>Gonalco Aves</b>	sensitivity	eyes, skin	++	dust, wood	rare
<b>Greenheart</b>	sensitivity	eyes, skin	++	dust, wood	common
<b>Blackwood (Surinam)</b>	sensitivity	eyes, skin	+++	dust, wood	common
<b>Hemlock</b>	nasopharyngeal cancer	respiratory	?	dust	unknown
<b>Iroko</b>	sensitivity, irritation, pneumoitis alveolitis	eyes, skin, respiratory	+++	dust, wood	common
<b>Mahogany (Swietenia)</b>	sensitivity, pneumoitis alveolitis	skin, respiratory	+	dust	unknown
<b>Mansonina</b>	sensitivity, irritation, nausea, malaise	eyes, skin	+++	dust, wood	common
		systemic	+	dust	unknown
<b>Maple (Spalted)</b>	sensitivity, pneumoitis alveolitis	respiratory	+++	dust (contains mold)	common
<b>Mimosa</b>	nausea, malaise	systemic	?	leaves, bark	unknown
<b>Myrtle</b>	sensitivity	respiratory	++	dust, leaves, bark	common

<b>Oak</b>	sensitivity, nasopharyngeal cancer	eyes, skin nose, throat	++	dust, leaves, bark	rare
<b>Obeche</b>	sensitivity, irritation	eyes, skin, respiratory	?	dust, wood	common
<b>Oleander</b>	direct toxicity, nausea, malaise, cancer	systemic	++++	dust, wood, leaves, bark	common
<b>Olivewood</b>	sensitivity, irritation	eyes, skin, respiratory	+++	dust, wood	common
<b>Opepe</b>	sensitivity	respiratory	+	dust	rare
<b>Padauk</b>	sensitivity, nausea, malaise	eyes, skin systemic	+	dust, wood	rare
<b>Pau Ferro</b>	sensitivity	eyes, skin	+	dust, wood	rare
<b>Peroba Rosa</b>	irritation, nausea, malaise	respiratory, systemic	++	dust, wood	unknown
<b>Purpleheart</b>	nausea, malaise	systemic	++	dust, wood	common
<b>Quebrach</b>	irritation	respiratory	++	dust, bark, leaves	common
	nausea, malaise, nasopharyngeal cancer	systemic nose, throat	? ?	dust dust	unknown unknown
<b>Redwood</b>	sensitivity, pneumoitis alveolitis, nasopharyngeal cancer	eyes, skin, respiratory  nose, throat	++  ?	dust  dust	rare  unknown
<b>Rosewoods</b>	sensitivity, irritation	eyes, skin, respiratory	++++	dust, wood	common
<b>Satinwood</b>	irritation	eyes, skin, respiratory	+++	dust, wood	common
<b>Sassafras</b>	sensitivity, direct toxicity, nausea, malaise, nasopharyngeal cancer	respiratory, systemic  nose, throat	+ + ?	dust dust, wood, leaves, bark dust	rare rare rare
<b>Sequoia</b>	irritation	respiratory	+	dust	rare
<b>Snakewood</b>	irritation	respiratory	++	dust, wood	rare
<b>Spruce</b>	sensitivity	respiratory	+	dust, wood	rare
<b>Walnut, Black</b>	sensitivity	eyes, skin	++	dust, wood	common
<b>Wenge</b>	sensitivity	eyes, skin, respiratory	++	dust, wood	common
<b>Willow</b>	sensitivity, nausea, malaise	respiratory, systemic	+	dust, wood, leaves, bark	unknown
<b>Western Red Cedar</b>	sensitivity	respiratory	+++	dust, leaves, bark	common

<b>Teak</b>	sensitivity, pneumoitis alveolitis	eyes, skin, respiratory	++	dust	common
<b>Yew</b>	irritation direct toxicity, nausea, malaise, nasopharyngeal cancer	eyes, skin systemic	++ ++++	dust dust, wood	common common
		nose, throat	++++	dust	common
<b>Zebrawood</b>	sensitivity	eyes, skin	++	dust, wood	rare

The information in this chart is based on data collected by Robert Woodcock, RN, BSN, CEN  
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## Glossary of Terms

### *Irritation*

The wood species acts as an *irritant*, causing itching, rashes, watery eyes, and other uncomfortable reactions.

### *Sensitivity*

The wood species acts as a sensitizer, causing people to develop allergic reactions after repeated exposure.

### *Direct toxicity*

Chemicals (called *extractives*) in the wood species are poisonous.

### *Nausea, malaise*

Exposure to the wood species cause flu-like symptoms.

### *Systemic*

Reactions are not confined to a specific body part; they affect much or most of the biologic system.

### *Nasopharyngeal cancer*

A cancer that affects the back of the throat where the nasal passages open into it.