

PRACTICAL PEARL: Poison Ivy

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It's officially summer and if you are outdoors, you are at risk for developing a rash from poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac.• This rash is caused by a reaction to the oil found in the plants. The itchy, blistering rash often does not start until 12 to 72 hours after contact with the oil.• Rash is described as itchy red streaks with blisters and can be associated with swelling and hives <p>https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/itchy-skin/poison-ivy-oak-and-sumac</p>
Initial Evaluation and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Immediately rinse your skin with lukewarm, soapy water and wash your clothing.• Do not scratch and leave blisters alone.• Take short, lukewarm baths in a colloidal oatmeal preparation, which you can buy at your local drugstore. You can also draw a bath and add one cup of baking soda to the running water. Taking short, cool showers may also help.• Apply calamine lotion or hydrocortisone cream.• Apply cool compresses to the itchy skin.• Consider taking an oral antihistamine.
When to Refer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Go to the Emergency Department with any trouble breathing or swallowing• See your primary care physician for rash that covers most of your body with extensive blisters or develops on your face or genitals, significant swelling or hives, especially eyelids• Treatment may require systemic corticosteroids, such as a course of oral prednisone tapered over 14 or 21 days