



Picture taken in mid-April in USDA zone 7a-7b. There are a number of poison ivy vines growing up this tree. Notice the variety in shapes and sizes of leaves. The keys to identification are the hairy tendrils hold the vine to the tree trunk, the 3 leaves with the middle leaf having a longer stalk, and the red bud / young leaves in spring.

Preventing Poison Ivy Rash

Poison Ivy contains Urushiol, the substance comes off the plant and gets on the skin and causes severe rash. Urushiol is potent and stays active for years at a time. It contaminates human skin, gear and clothing. Most people don't react to the urushiol immediately, so there is typically a window of 6-8 hours – to 3 days before a rash occurs. Therefore there is a window of opportunity in which the urushiol

can be removed from the skin to allow a person to completely avoid the rash, or at least dramatically cut down on the severity of the rash. How does a person remove urushiol from skin, gear and clothing?

- **Be proactive in regards to removing the contaminate (urushiol) from the skin. There are three options.**

1. Soap and Water – this would only be helpful if a person could use it within 10 minutes of exposure.
2. Tecnu original – is a liquid skin clanser that can be applied directly to skin or gear to remove urushiol, and can be used with or without rinse water. Tecnu can be applied, rubbed around and wiped off with a towel or cloth.
3. Tecnu Extreme – is a mild scrub with micro-fine scrubbing beads to remove embeded urushiol from the skin. Use within 8 hours after exposure to poison ivy. It is important to be diligent when washing areas where skin creases because urushiol accumulates in these areas.

- **Be proactive in removing urushiol from fibers in clothing/gear. Gear/clothing contaminated with urushiol can repeatedly contaminate skin if not removed from the gear/clothing.**

1. Saturate cuff of shirt and/or gloves with Tecnu, after 2 minures rinse the cuff with water. Forearms and hands should be treated with Tecnu or Tecnu Extreme as part of a regular regimen.
2. At the very first sign of a rash, use Tecnu Extreme to stop the rash from spreading. The severity of the rash can be lessened if Tecnu Extreme is used aquickly to remove remaining urushiol that is on the body.
3. Use a topical product for drying up the rash and help the healing process.
4. Use Tecnu for decontaminating tools by wiping a cloth with full strength Tecnu directly onto the tool.
5. Wash contaminated clothing in hot water and laundry detergent. This might not completely get rid of urushiol from fibers, but it is the only thing to do at this time. Putting Tecnu in the wash does not remove urushiol from fiber.