

Wood Toxicity: Symptoms, Species, and Solutions

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Table 3. Woods known to have the most severe wood toxicity effects, arranged by trade name. Adapted from the Wood Database (<http://www.wood-database.com>). A good reference book about wood toxicity is “Woods Injurious to Human Health – A Manual” by Björn Hausen (1981) ISBN 3-11-008485-6.

Table 3. Woods known to have most severe wood toxicity effects, arranged by trade name.

Common Name(s)	Botanical name	Family	Distribution	Reported Symptoms	Affected Organs
African Blackwood	<i>Dalbergia melanoxylon</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Central Africa, Southern Africa	Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Lungs
African Mahogany	<i>Khaya anthotheca</i>	Meliaceae (Mahogany Family)	West Tropical Africa	Irritant, Sensitizer, Nasopharyngeal Cancer (rare)	Skin, Lungs
African Mahogany	<i>Khaya grandifoliola</i>	Meliaceae (Mahogany Family)	West Tropical Africa	Irritant, Sensitizer, Nasopharyngeal Cancer (rare)	Skin, Lungs
African Mahogany	<i>Khaya ivorensis</i>	Meliaceae (Mahogany Family)	West Tropical Africa	Irritant, Sensitizer, Nasopharyngeal Cancer (rare)	Skin, Lungs
African Mahogany	<i>Khaya senegalensis</i>	Meliaceae (Mahogany Family)	West Tropical Africa	Irritant, Sensitizer, Nasopharyngeal Cancer (rare)	Skin, Lungs
African Padauk, Vermillion	<i>Pterocarpus soyauxii</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Central and Tropical Africa	Asthma, Irritant, Nausea, Sensitizer	Skin, Lungs
African Walnut	<i>Lovoa trichilioides</i>	Meliaceae (Mahogany Family)	West Tropical Africa	Irritant, Nasopharyngeal Cancer (rare), Systemic Reaction	Skin, Lungs
Albizia, Tanga Tanga	<i>Albizia ferruginea</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Tropical Africa	Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye), Dizziness, Irritant, Nausea, Nosebleeds	Skin, Lungs
Albizia, Tanga Tanga	<i>Albizia versicolor</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Tropical Africa	Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye), Dizziness, Irritant, Nausea, Nosebleeds	Skin, Lungs
Alligator Juniper	<i>Juniperus deppeana</i>	Cupressaceae (Cypress Family)	Southwest USA, Northern Mexico	Irritant	Skin, Lungs
Amazon Rosewood	<i>Dalbergia spruceana</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Brazil, Venezuela, Bolivia	Asthma, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs, Nasal, Head
Amboyna Burl	<i>Pterocarpus indicus</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Andaman Islands	Asthma, Irritant, Nausea, Sensitizer	Eyes, Lungs
Amboyna Burl	<i>Pterocarpus macrocarpus</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Southeast Asia	Asthma, Irritant	Skin, Eyes, Lungs, Nasal, Head
Andaman Padauk	<i>Pterocarpus dalbergioides</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Andaman Islands	Asthma, Irritant, Nausea, Sensitizer	Skin, Lungs

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Araracanga	<i>Aspidosperma megalocarpon</i>	Apocynaceae	Mexico, Central America, N South America	Asthma, Irritant	Skin, Eyes, Lungs, Head, Gastro-intestinal
Aromatic Red Cedar, Eastern Red Cedar	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	Cupressaceae (Cypress Family)	Eastern North America	Irritant	Skin, Lungs
Bigleaf Maple	<i>Acer macrophyllum</i>	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)	Pacific Northwest of North America	Asthma, Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis (spalted woods), Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Lungs, Heart, Eyes, Throat, Gastro-intestinal
Black Locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	North America	Irritant, Nausea	Skin, Eyes, Lungs, Gastro-intestinal
Black Maple, Black Sugar Maple	<i>Acer nigrum</i>	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)	Northeastern USA	Asthma, Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis (spalted woods), Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Head
Bois de Rose	<i>Dalbergia maritima</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Madagascar	Asthma, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Bosse, Guarea	<i>Guarea cedrata</i>	Meliaceae (Mahogany Family)	West and Central Africa	Asthma, Headache, Irritant, Nausea, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Bosse, Guarea	<i>Guarea thompsonii</i>	Meliaceae (Mahogany Family)	West and Central Africa	Asthma, Headache, Irritant, Nausea, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Box Elder, Boxelder Maple, Manitoba Maple, Ash-leaved Maple	<i>Acer negundo</i>	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)	North America	Asthma, Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis (spalted woods), Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Brazilian Rosewood, Bahia Rosewood, Jacaranda*	<i>Dalbergia nigra</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Brazil	Asthma, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Burma Padauk	<i>Pterocarpus macrocarpus</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Myanmar and Thailand	Asthma, Irritant	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Burmese Blackwood	<i>Dalbergia cultrata</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Southeast Asia	Asthma, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Burmese Rosewood	<i>Dalbergia oliveri</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Myanmar, Southeast Asia	Asthma, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Cedar of Lebanon	<i>Cedrus libani</i>	Pinaceae (Pine Family)	Mediterranean	Irritant	Skin, Eyes, Lungs

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Ceylon Ebony	<i>Diospyros ebenum</i>	Ebenaceae (Ebony Family)	Southeast Asia	Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye), Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Chechen, Chechem, Black Poisonwood, Caribbean Rosewood	<i>Metopium brownei</i>	Anacardiaceae (Cashew Family)	Caribbean, Southeast Mexico, Central America	Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Chico Zapote, Zapote, Sapodilla	<i>Manilkara zapota</i>	Sapotaceae (Milkwood Family)	Southern Mexico, Central America	Irritant	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Cocobolo, Cocobola, Cocabola	<i>Dalbergia retusa</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Central America	Asthma, Irritant, Nausea, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs, Gastro-intestinal
Desert Ironwood	<i>Olneya tesota</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Southwest USA, Northwest Mexico	Coughing, Irritant, Sneezing	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
East Indian Rosewood, Indian Rosewood	<i>Dalbergia latifolia</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia	Asthma, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
East Indian Satinwood, Ceylon Satinwood	<i>Chloroxylon swietenia</i>	Rutaceae (Citrus Family)	Central and Southern India, Sri Lanka	Headache, Irritant, Intestinal Disorders, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
European Yew, Common Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>	Taxaceae (Yew Family)	Europe, Southwest Asia	Direct Toxin! Cardiac Effects, Headache, Irritant, Nausea	Skin
Field Maple, Hedge Maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)	Europe	Asthma, Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis (spalted woods), Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Greenheart	<i>Chlorocardium rodiei</i>	Lauraceae (Laurel Family)	Northeast South America	Irritant, Wheezing, Septic Wounds (splinters), Cardiac Disorders, Intestinal Disorders	Eyes, Lungs
Guanacaste, Parota	<i>Enterolobium cyclocarpum</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Mexico, Central America, Northern South America	Irritant	Skin, Systemic
Hard Maple, Sugar Maple, Rock Maple	<i>Acer saccharum</i>	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)	Northeast North America	Asthma, Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis (spalted woods), Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Systemic

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Honduran Rosewood, Honduras Rosewood	<i>Dalbergia stevensonii</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Belize	Asthma, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs, Head
Ipe, Brazilian Walnut, Lapacho	<i>Handroanthus</i> species	Bignoniaceae	Tropical Americas, Cultivated in Plantations	Asthma, Headache, Irritant	Skin, Eyes, Lungs, Head
Iroko	<i>Milicia excelsa</i>	Moraceae (Fig Family; Mulberry Family)	Tropical Africa	Asthma, Boils, Dizziness, Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs, Head
Iroko	<i>Milicia regia</i>	Moraceae (Fig Family; Mulberry Family)	Tropical Africa	Asthma, Boils, Dizziness, Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Lungs
Katalox, Mexican Royal Ebony	<i>Swartzia cubensis</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Southern Mexico, Central America, N South America	Irritant	Skin, Lungs
Kingwood	<i>Dalbergia cearensis</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Brazil	Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye), Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Lungs
Lebeck, Kokko	<i>Albizia lebeck</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Southern Asia, Widely Cultivated	Irritant	Skin, Lungs
Macassar Ebony	<i>Diospyros celebica</i>	Ebenaceae (Ebony Family)	Southeast Asia	Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Lungs
Madagascar Rosewood, Palisander	<i>Dalbergia baronii</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Madagascar	Asthma, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Lungs
Madagascar Rosewood, Palisander	<i>Dalbergia greveana</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Madagascar	Asthma, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Systemic
Madagascar Rosewood, Palisander	<i>Dalbergia madagascariensis</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Madagascar	Asthma, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes
Madagascar Rosewood, Palisander	<i>Dalbergia monticola</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Madagascar	Asthma, Irritant, Sensitizer	Nasal
Makore	<i>Tieghemella africana</i>	Sapotaceae (Milkwood Family)	Western and Central Africa	Blood Disorders, Dizziness, Headache, Irritant, Nausea, Nervous System Disorders	Skin, Eyes, Lungs, Heart, Head, Gastro- Intestinal

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Makore	<i>Tieghemella heckelii</i>	Sapotaceae (Milkwood Family)	Western and Central Africa	Blood Disorders, Dizziness, Headache, Irritant, Nausea, Nervous System Disorders	Skin, Systemic
Mansonia	<i>Mansonia altissima</i>	Malvaceae (Mallow Family)	Western Tropical Africa	Asthma, Cardiac Disorders, Dizziness, Headache, Irritant, Nausea, Nosebleed, Sensitizer, Septic Wounds (splinters)	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Mediterranean Cypress	<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i>	Cupressaceae (Cypress Family)	Eastern Mediterranean	Headache, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Norway Maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)	Europe, Western Asia, Widely Cultivated in North America	Asthma, Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis (spalted woods), Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Olive	<i>Olea species</i>	Oleaceae	Europe, Eastern Africa, Southern Africa	Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs, Head, Gastro-intestinal
Pacific Yew, Oregon Yew	<i>Taxus brevifolia</i>	Taxaceae (Yew Family)	Pacific Northwest of North America	Direct Toxin! Cardiac Effects, Headache, Irritant, Nausea	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Pau Ferro, Morado, Bolivian Rosewood, Santos Rosewood	<i>Machaerium scleroxylon</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Tropical South America (Bolivia, Brazil)	Irritant, Sensitizer	Lungs, Nasal
Peroba Rosa	<i>Aspidosperma polyneuron</i>	Apocynaceae	Brazil, Argentina	Asthma, Irritant, Nausea, Sensitizer	Lungs
Red Maple	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)	Eastern North America	Asthma, Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis (spalted woods), Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs

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Redwood, Sequoia, Coast Redwood, California Redwood, Vavona (burl)	<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i>	Cupressaceae (Cypress Family)	West Coast of USA	Asthma, Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis, Irritant, Nasopharyngeal Cancer (rare), Sensitizer	Skin, Lungs
Rengas, Borneo Rosewood, Tiger Rengas	<i>Gluta species</i>	Anacardiaceae (Cashew Family)	India to Papua New Guinea	Fever, Irritant, Blisters, Ulcers, General Symptoms	
Rengas, Borneo Rosewood, Tiger Rengas	<i>Melanorrhoea species</i>	Anacardiaceae (Cashew Family)	India to Papua New Guinea	Blisters, Fever, Irritant, Systemic Effects, Ulcers	Skin, Lungs
Siamese Rosewood, Vietnamese Rosewood, Thailand Rosewood, Cambodian Rosewood	<i>Dalbergia cochinchinensis</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos	Asthma, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Silver Maple	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)	Northeastern USA	Asthma, Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis (spalted woods), Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes
Sneezewood	<i>Ptaeroxylon obliquum</i>	Rutaceae (Citrus Family)	Southern Africa	Irritant	Skin, Eyes, Lungs
Southern Silky Oak	<i>Grevillea robusta</i>	Proteaceae (Protea Family)	Australia (East Coast); Cultivated Elsewhere	Blisters, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Gastro-intestinal
Striped Maple	<i>Acer pensylvanicum</i>	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)	Eastern North America	Asthma, Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis (spalted woods), Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Lungs
Sycamore Maple, European Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)	Europe, Southwest Asia	Asthma, Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis (spalted woods), Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Lungs
Tambootie (Tambuti, Tambotie), Sandalo	<i>Spirostachys africana</i>	Euphorbiaceae (Spurge Family)	Southern Africa	Direct Toxin! Blindness, Gastro-intestinal Disorders, Irritant	Skin, Lungs

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Teak, Burmese Teak	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	Lamiaceae	Southern Asia, Cultivated in Plantations	Asthma, Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis (spalted woods), Irritant, Nausea, Sensitizer, Vision Disorders	Skin, Lungs, Head, Heart, Eyes
Thuya (burl)	<i>Tetraclinis articulata</i>	Cupressaceae (Cypress Family)	Mediterranean (Atlas Mountains)	Irritant	Skin, Lungs, Head, Heart, Eyes
Wamara, Guyana Rosewood	<i>Swartzia benthamiana</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Southern Mexico, Central America, Northern South America	Irritant	Skin, Eyes, Lungs, Gastro-intestinal
Wamara, Guyana Rosewood	<i>Swartzia leiocalycina</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Southern Mexico, Central America, Northern South America	Irritant	Skin, Eyes
Wenge	<i>Millettia laurentii</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Central Africa	Gastro-intestinal Disorders, Irritant, Nervous System Disorders, Sensitizer, Septic Wounds (splinters)	Skin, Eyes, Lungs, Gastro-intestinal, Head
West Indian Satinwood	<i>Zanthoxylum flavum</i>	Rutaceae (Citrus Family)	Caribbean	Blisters, Gastro-intestinal Disorders, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin, Eyes, Lungs, Gastro-intestinal, Head
Yucatan Rosewood, Panama Rosewood, Nicaraguan Rosewood	<i>Dalbergia tucurensis</i>	Fabaceae (Legume Family)	Central and South America	Asthma, Irritant, Sensitizer	Skin