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Poison Ingestion!

The best method for preventing your pet from poison exposure is to maintain a containment area for your pet that is free of hazardous materials, walk your dog on a leash when it is not in its “home”, and keep your cat indoors.

Foods to Avoid Feeding Your Pet

Items to avoid	Reasons to avoid
Alcoholic beverages	Can cause intoxication, <u>coma</u> , and death.
Avocado	The leaves, seeds, fruit, and bark contain persin, which can cause vomiting and diarrhea.
Bones from fish, poultry, or other meat sources	Can cause obstruction or laceration of the digestive system.
Cat food	Generally too high in protein and fats.
Chocolate, coffee, tea, and other caffeine	Contain caffeine, theobromine, or theophylline, which can cause vomiting and diarrhea and be toxic to the heart and nervous systems.
Citrus oil extracts	Can cause vomiting.
Fat trimmings	Can cause pancreatitis.
Fish (raw, canned or cooked)	If fed exclusively or in high amounts can result in a thiamine (a B vitamin) deficiency leading to loss of appetite, seizures, and in severe cases, death.
Grapes, raisins and currants	Contain an unknown toxin, which can damage the kidneys. There have been no problems associated with grape seed extract.
Hops	Unknown compound causes panting, increased heart rate, elevated temperature, seizures, and death.
Human vitamin supplements containing iron	Can damage the lining of the digestive system and be toxic to the other organs including the liver and kidneys.
Macadamia nuts	Contain an unknown toxin, which can affect the digestive and nervous systems and muscle.
Marijuana	Can depress the nervous system, cause vomiting, and changes

	in the heart rate.
Milk and other dairy products	Some adult dogs and cats may develop diarrhea if given large amounts of dairy products.
Moldy or spoiled food, garbage	Can contain multiple toxins causing vomiting and diarrhea and can also affect other organs.
Mushrooms	Can contain toxins, which may affect multiple systems in the body, cause shock, and result in death.
Onions and garlic (raw, cooked, or powder)	Contain sulfoxides and disulfides, which can damage red blood cells and cause <i>anemia</i> . Cats are more susceptible than dogs. Garlic is less toxic than onions.
Persimmons	Seeds can cause intestinal obstruction and enteritis.
Pits from peaches and plums	Can cause obstruction of the digestive tract.
Raw eggs	Contain an enzyme called avidin, which decreases the absorption of biotin (a B vitamin). This can lead to skin and hair coat problems. Raw eggs may also contain <i>Salmonella</i> .
Raw meat	May contain bacteria such as <i>Salmonella</i> and <i>E. coli</i> , which can cause vomiting and diarrhea.*
Rhubarb leaves	Contain oxalates, which can affect the digestive, nervous, and urinary systems.
Salt	If eaten in large quantities, it may lead to <i>electrolyte</i> imbalances.
String	Can become trapped in the digestive system; called a "string foreign body."
Sugary foods	Can lead to obesity, dental problems, and possibly diabetes mellitus.
Table scraps (in large amounts)	Table scraps are not nutritionally balanced. They should never be more than 10% of the diet. Fat should be trimmed from meat; bones should not be fed.
Tobacco	Contains nicotine, which affects the digestive and nervous systems. Can result in rapid heart beat, collapse, coma, and death.
Yeast dough	Can expand and produce gas in the digestive system, causing pain and possible rupture of the stomach or intestines.
Xylitol (artificial sweetener)	Can cause very low blood sugar (hypoglycemia), which can result in vomiting, weakness and collapse. In high doses can cause liver failure.

Warm Weather Hazards

- Blue-green algae in ponds
- Antifreeze/Coolant
- Gasoline/Oil
- Animal toxins – toads, insects, spiders, snakes and scorpions
- Citronella candles
- Cocoa mulch
- Compost piles

- Fertilizers
- Pesticides
- Flea products – Flea control is commonly labeled specifically for dogs or cats. This is because the agents used for dogs are not safe for cats. Follow the label directions and amounts correctly.
- Outdoor plants and plant bulbs
- Swimming-pool treatment supplies
- Fly baits containing methomyl
- Slug and snail baits containing metaldehyde

Medications

Some pet owners may mistakenly think that the medications used to treat human symptoms will work for animals, as well. Never give your pet a human medication. Even something as simple as aspirin can be lethal to your pet. Products such as acetaminophen and any aspirin product can cause stomach bleeding in your pet. Medications such as birth control and vitamins can also cause internal bleeding.

- Cold medicines
- Anticancer drugs
- Antidepressants
- Vitamins
- Diet Pills
- Birth Control Pills
- Pain Killers

Cold Weather Hazards

- Antifreeze/Coolant
- Liquid potpourri
- Ice melting products (De-Icing Salts)
- Rat and mouse bait

Holiday Hazards

- Christmas tree water (may contain fertilizers and bacteria, which, if ingested, can upset the stomach.)
- Electrical cords

- Ribbons or tinsel (can become lodged in the intestines and cause intestinal obstruction – most often occurs with kittens!)
- Batteries
- Glass ornaments

Nontoxic Substances for Dogs and Cats

The following substances are considered to be non-toxic, although they may cause mild gastrointestinal upset in some animals:

- Water-based paints
- Toilet bowl water
- Silica gel
- Poinsettia
- Cat litter
- Glue traps
- Glow jewelry

Common Household Hazards

- Mothballs
- House plants (SHOULD ASSUME ALL ARE POISONOUS TO SOME DEGREE – 448 species listed on the ASPCA website alone!) – cats are the primary victims
- Detergents
- Fabric softener
- Drain cleaner
- Oven cleaner sprays
- Bleach
- Disinfectants
- Lime/scale remover
- Paint thinner
- Lighter fluid
- Rodent bait
- Fly bait
- Lead
- Liquid potpourri
- Insecticides
- Coins – especially Post-1982 pennies (due to high concentration of zinc)
- Small toys (balls, Lego's, broken off pieces)
- Yarn/Thread
- Electrical Cords

- Buttons
- Batteries
- Twist Ties
- Rubber Bands
- Cotton Swabs
- Hair Pins
- Jewelry
- Plastic Wrap
- Foil
- Nylons/Socks
- Wax/Candles
- Dental Floss

What To Do if Your Pet is Poisoned

If you suspect your pet has been poisoned, what can you do to increase its chances for survival?

Be prepared – Post your veterinarian’s telephone number in a convenient location. You should also post the address and number of the nearby emergency clinic, along with the numbers of Animal Poison Control Centers:

ASPCA Animal Poison Control – (888) 426-4435

Pet Poison Helpline – (800) 213-680

Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center – (800) 222-1222

Take Action – Call your veterinarian or local veterinary emergency hospital. If your pet ingests poison, make sure to observe the animal closely. To treat a poisoning successfully, the veterinarian will need a complete history of your pet’s symptoms, including when the symptoms were first noticed, what the animal may have been exposed to, when exposure occurred, how much was ingested and when. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO INDUCE VOMITING OR ADMINISTER ANYTHING BY MOUTH BEFORE SPEAKING TO YOUR VETERINARIAN.** Many toxic substances may cause more harm to your pet if vomited by up.

Provide a history – Providing a detailed history of symptoms to your veterinarian is critical. Immediately collect and preserve any vomit, food products you may find, medication bottles and stool samples to help your vet rule out or determine intentional poisoning. Freezing vomit and stool samples is the best method to preserve them as evidence. You can do this yourself, or take it to your vet to freeze and later send to a laboratory for testing.

As a concerned pet owner, it's up to you to provide your vet with information that could potentially save your pet's life. Symptoms are important as they allow vets to work backward and figure out the cause. Only after other explanations can be ruled out, can your vet explore the idea that someone may have maliciously poisoned the animal.

If you are aware of a chemical or product that your pet may have ingested, bring the container for the product to the veterinarian that will be treating your pet. Many chemicals have very specific remedies or antidotes so it is crucial to know the exact ingredients!

Be aware – Following these steps may help save your animal's life after an accidental or intentional poisoning. If you have cats, keep them indoors. If you have dogs, be aware of their surroundings and behavior and don't let them roam free.