

Pawsitive Press

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Animal Poison Prevention

Heather Manfredi, D.V.M.

As with everything in life knowledge and awareness is helpful in the prevention and preparation of emergencies. Living in Florida we are constantly making lists and plans for hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and the loss of power that accompany them, so why not have a plan of action for poison prevention for your furry family members.

Having basic knowledge of the things in your home that may be potentially harmful to your pets and how to deal with those substances, may help you carry out a safe and effective plan of action. Almost 91 percent of calls to Pet Poison Helpline in 2012 involved dogs – this is a testament to dogs’ curious nature and indifference to various foods. Nearly half of the calls were for dogs that ingested *human* medications. Therefore it’s clearly wise to keep medications out of their reach, as you would children; but there are many other common household substances toxic to dogs. The five most common toxins to dogs are human medications, human foods, insecticides, rodenticides, and dietary supplements (vitamins).



Human Medications

Obviously the most common things that dogs ingest are those that are most commonly available. The majority of the pets needing treatment have ingested owners’ antidepressants, such as Prozac, Paxil, and Effexor, and common over the counter drugs like Tylenol, Advil, and Aleve, which can cause serious harm to dogs.



Human Foods

Dogs will often help themselves to foods that are safe for humans, but dangerous for dogs. The most predominant food that dogs encounter is chocolate. Sugarless gums and candies are also very dangerous as they contain Xylitol. These items are often kept in candy dishes in homes and so they are accessible to the pets.

Raisins and grapes are often overlooked by dog owners as potentially dangerous, but they are extremely toxic and can cause kidney failure. Other human foods toxic to dogs include macadamia nuts, garlic, onions, yeast-based dough and table salt. The best approach is to not give your pet people food without consulting your veterinarian.



Insecticides

While many household insecticides are well tolerated by dogs, certain potent types such as organophosphates (often found in rose-care products), can be life-threatening even when ingested in small amounts. Other insecticides such as sprays, baits, and granules should be kept in proper storage containers or separate rooms, away from your pet.

Rodenticides

Rodenticides are probably the scariest for owners, as they are designed to cause death in the rodent that ingests them. There are various active ingredients and only one type has an antidote. Depending on the type and

Animal Poison Cont'd

amount of poison ingested the symptoms can vary from moderate to severe—anywhere from uncontrolled bleeding, swelling of the brain, kidney failure, and seizures. There is also potential for relay toxicity, meaning that pets and wildlife can be poisoned by eating dead rodents that were poisoned by rodenticides.



Dietary Supplements and Vitamins

While many items in this category such as Vitamins C, K, and E are fairly safe, others such as iron, Vitamin D and alpha-lipoic acid can be highly toxic in overdose situations. Additionally, some multi-vitamins even contain xylitol, so they can be very dangerous

If you think your pet may have ingested something harmful, take action immediately. Contact a veterinarian or Pet Poison Helpline at 1-800-213-6680. Pet Poison Helpline is the most cost-effective animal poison control center in North America charging only \$39 per call; this includes unlimited follow-up consultations. Pet Poison Helpline also has an iPhone application listing an extensive database of over 200 poisons dangerous to cats and dogs. “Pet Poison Help” is available on iTunes for \$1.99.

Tips for Handling Pet Poisonings or Accidental Ingestions

- 1-**Keep the pet poison control number handy or simply bookmark the home page for easy reference.
- 2-**If you suspect poisoning from a specific substance, pick up the remnants of the toxin, the box, the bottle and anything associated with it. Keep this “evidence” handy so you can answer your veterinarian or poison control’s detailed questions.
- 3-**Attempt to ascertain how much of the substance could have been ingested. Think worst-case scenario for safety’s sake.
- 4-**Try to establish a timeframe for when the poison may have been ingested. It makes a difference whether an hour might have lapsed...or an entire weekend.
- 5-**If you’re not sure whether the offending item is poisonous, call a veterinarian you trust—immediately. Alternatively (in the middle of the night, for instance), call the pet poison control center right away. Do **NOT** rely on advice from friends, family, or neighbors. Though they may know the right answer, it’s always best to get the info first hand from someone who’s trained to address these issues.
- 6-NEVER** induce vomiting or administer home remedies for poisonings without talking to a trained individual first. Caustic compounds can damage sensitive anatomic structures on their way back up. It’s best to let a professional do these things—or at least walk you through them.
- 7-**Sometimes the item isn’t technically a toxin. Think Koosh ball, for example. Or an entire Kong toy. This is not the poison control’s purview anymore; it’s your vet’s—or the ER vet’s.
- 8-**When you’ve determined that the poison your pet ingested requires veterinary attention, my preferred approach—whether it be Tylenol, plants or toilet bowl cleaner—is to open up a file with the ASPCA’s Poison Control Center. Poison control will advise your veterinarian as to the best course of treatment: induce vomiting or not, fluids or not, charcoal or not, antidotes, lab work, surgery, etc.
- 9-Prevention** is the final point I need to make. Keeping tablets and capsules and cleaners and creams away from pets is obviously the best way to handle toxicities. But...
- 10-...**you can’t do this properly without the *knowledge* of what’s toxic and what’s not. Read over the [ASPCA’s FAQ’s](#) when it comes to pet poisons. Some of the items may surprise you.

Top 10
Everyday
PAT POISONS



Dog Poisons:

1. Chocolate
2. Mouse and Rat Poisons (rodenticides)
3. Vitamins and Minerals (e.g., Vitamin D3, iron, etc.)
4. **NSAIDs** (e.g., ibuprofen, naproxen, etc.)
5. Cardiac Medications (e.g., calcium channel blockers, beta-blockers, etc.)
6. Cold and Allergy Medications (e.g., pseudoephedrine, phenylephrine, etc.)
7. Antidepressants (e.g., selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors)
8. Xylitol
9. **Acetaminophen** (e.g., Tylenol)
10. Caffeine Pills



Cat Poisons:



1. Topical spot-on insecticides
2. Household Cleaners
3. Antidepressants
4. Lilies
5. Insoluble Oxalate Plants (e.g., Dieffenbachia, Philodendron, etc.)
6. **Human and Veterinary NSAIDs**
7. Cold and Flu Medication (e.g., Tylenol)
8. Glow Sticks
9. ADD/ADHD Medications/Amphetamines
10. Mouse and Rat Poison

If you suspect your pet has ingested any of these items or any other questionable substance, call Pet Poison Helpline or your veterinarian for assistance. Accurate and timely identification of the suspected substance is very important. Having the container, package, or label in hand will save valuable time and may save the life of your pet.



Animal Hospital of Dunedin
1355 Pinehurst Rd
Dunedin, FL 34698

Phone: 727-733-9351
Fax: 727-733-8165
E-mail:
practicemanager@tampabay.rr.com



“Caring for pets with love and kindness”



We're on the Web!
www.ahofd.com



Animal Hospital
OF DUNEDIN
Caring for Pets with Love and Kindness

\$1

First Exam - New Patient

(\$49-\$80 Savings)

Includes comprehensive physical exam and one vaccine. Does not include 3yr Rabies vaccine. Must be presented at the time of purchase. Coupon may not be combined with any other offer. NL



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Caring for Pets with Love and Kindness

2 Months Free Advantage Multi

(\$36.00 - \$42.00 savings)

Buy one 6 pack of Advantage Multi and get 2 months same size free. Patient must have been seen by a doctor at the Animal Hospital of Dunedin within the past year. May not be combined with any other offer. Coupon must be presented at the time of purchase.

Expires 3/31/15 NL



Animal Hospital
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\$12 Mail in Rebate

Any Size Heartgard

Purchase 12 months of any size Heartgard and receive a \$12 mail-in rebate. The rebate form will be filled out and mailed in by our staff and Merial will mail a check directly to your home. By law, pets must have been seen in our office within the last 12 months and should have a negative heartworm test. Must be presented at the time of purchase. Coupon may not be combined with any other offer. Expires: 03/31/15 NL