



# TOXIC SUBSTANCES

## Toxicity Overview

Pets are curious and will frequently ingest toxic items in their environment. Make sure you “puppy/kitty” proof your house as you would for a toddler. Put all chemical, drugs and potential foreign objects (small toys, latex toys, balloons) out of reach in a cupboard that locks.

Should your pet consume a toxin or potential toxin we do not recommend inducing vomiting at home, however we do recommend immediate veterinary care so that appropriate vomiting can be induced in a controlled environment. Some toxins can actually cause more damage when they are vomited up than when allowed to pass through the system (ie: petroleum products). You should call ASPCA’s animal poison control (1-888-426-4435) on the way to your vet or emergency hospital so that your doctor can access the case number and immediately initiate appropriate treatment.

Some common *unexpectedly deadly* toxins are: prescription medications, Lily’s, raisins, grapes, chocolate, Xylitol containing products (gum, sweets, etc), coco mulch, tobacco, coffee, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, playdough, fire works, paint balls, wild mushrooms, bread dough and onions.



**Note:** ASPCA’s animal poison control (1-888-426-4435) is not subsidized by the US government and therefore requires a payment for information.

## Use of Over the Counter Medications:



Many human medications are not safe to use in your pet. Some of the most commonly given human medications (Motrin, Tylenol and aspirin) are very toxic in cats and dogs. Do not give any medications to your pet without first speaking to your veterinarian.



## Pet Poisoning: Signs and Symptoms

Ingested, inhaled or absorbed poison substances can cause a wide range of symptoms such as:

- mouth irritation
- skin rash
- lethargy
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- lack of appetite
- drooling
- staggering
- hallucination / over-reaction to sound or light
- breathing difficulty
- bleeding disorders
- muscle tremor and rigidity
- seizure
- heart failure
- kidney or liver problems
- coma

The effect of poisoning may take time and is not always visible at first. Immediate treatment given to your dog may prevent significant and serious illness. You should be aware that some poisoning can cause permanent damage and even death despite immediate treatment.

## Common Toxicities

**People Medications:** NSAIDs (ibuprofen, acetomenophen, naproxen), antidepressants, cold medicines, anti-cancer drugs, vitamins, diet pills.

**Pet medications:** cases of pet poisoning by veterinary drugs are not uncommon. Often reported problem medications include painkillers, flea & tick preventatives and de-wormers.

**People food:** Animals have different metabolisms than people. Some foods and beverages that are perfectly safe for people can be dangerous, and sometimes fatal, for dogs.

**Rat/mouse poison:** Rodenticides, if ingested by dogs, can cause severe problems and possibly death if not treated immediately.

**Household plants:** They may be pretty, but plants aren't necessarily pet friendly. Hyacinth, Lantana, Philodendrons and Mistletoe are among the many plants that are potentially poisonous to pets .

**Chemical hazards:** Not surprisingly, chemicals contained in antifreeze, paint thinner, and chemicals for pools can act as pet poison. The pet poisoning symptoms they may produce include stomach upset, depression, and chemical burns.

**Household cleaners:** Just as cleaners like bleach can poison people, they are also a leading cause of pet poisoning, resulting in stomach and respiratory tract problems.

**Heavy metals:** Lead, which may be in paint, linoleum, and batteries, can be poisonous if eaten by your dog, causing gastrointestinal and neurological problems. Zinc poisoning may occur in dogs that swallow pennies produced after 1982, producing symptoms of weakness from severe anemia.

**Garden products:** Products for your lawn and garden (such as fertilizer, pesticides or mole bait) may be poisonous to pets that ingest them.

