

Gunner's Dog House

Common Causes of Dog Poisoning

Thousands of dogs (and cats) needlessly suffer and many die each year by accidental ingestion of household poisons. Dogs may have access to poisons both inside and outside of the home. Some of these include plants, foods, herbicides, pesticides, mouse poisons, medications, metals, and cleaning supplies.

House Hold Plants: Both Indoor and Outdoor : It is really important to be aware of what plants you have inside and outside of your house. There are allot of plants that are poisonous to dogs, the severity of the poisoning varies on the plant and can cause sickness and diarrhea with severe cases of poisoning leading to coma and death.

Dogs can be poisoned by plants if they eat or even just chew part of the plant, the flower, the bulb or the plant leaves. Flowers heavy in pollen can also drop pollen onto the pet's coat, which could then be licked off and ingested by your pet.

Plants that are most popular in gardens/home but are poisonous to dogs : Daffodil (especially the bulbs), Castor oil bush (dogs love the seeds), Cherry laurel (common hedging plant), Laburnum (and related species), Lilies / Lily of the Valley (especially toxic to cats), Philodendron (popular ornamental house plant) Azalea, Foxgloves, Ivy (some species), Rhubarb, Yew

Seasonal - Christmas plants to avoid : Poinsettia, Mistletoe, Holly Berries

Many families include a Christmas tree as part of their holiday decorations. Some dogs and cats like to drink the tree water; the water itself is not poisonous, but if a fertilizer was added to the water it may be poisonous. This fertilizer may cause the pet to suffer with diarrhea and vomiting. It is better to try to prevent the pets from drinking tree water by keeping it covered.

More Poisonous Plants : Alfalfa (in quantity), Aloe vera, Amaryllis, Apple (seeds), Apricot (stone), Asparagus Fern, Autumn Crocus, Azalea, Baby's Breath, Bird of Paradise, Box, Caladium, Calla Lily, CastoBean, Ceriman, Cherry (seeds and wilting leaves), Christmas Rose, Cineraria, Clematis, Cordatum, Corn Plant, Croton, Cuban Laurel, Cyclamen, Daffodil, Devil's Ivy, Dieffenbachia, Dracaena, Dragon Tree, Elephants Ears, Emerald Fern, Foxglove, Geranium, Indian Rubber Plant, Ivy, Kalanchoe, Lily of the Valley, Lillies, Philodendron, Mother-in-Laws Tongue, Marijuana, Mistletoe, Morning Glory, Narcissus, Nephytis, Nightshade, Oleander, Onion, Peach (wilting leaves and stone), Pencil Cactus, Plumosa Fern, Poinsettia, Poison Ivy, Poison Oak, Pothos, Potato Plant, Primrose, Rhododendron, Swiss Cheese Plant, Tomato Plant (Green fruit, stems and leaves), Weeping Fig, Wisteria, Yew

General symptoms of poisoning : Oral or skin irritation, Upset stomach / Vomiting / Diarrhoea, Weakness, Rapid breathing, Fever, Drooling, Coma, Heart failure, Depression, Excitability or lethargy, Tremors / Seizures / Fitting, Increased Thirst, Dilated Pupils, Dizziness / Loss of Balance, Disorientation

Contact your vet immediately if you think your pet has eaten any toxic plants, flowers, or in fact any toxic items or substances.

Myth or Fact - Is Chocolate Harmful to Dogs? Fact -Yes, Chocolate is poisonous to dogs. Chocolate in sufficient doses is lethally toxic to dogs (and horses and possibly cats). Chocolate contains a chemical stimulant, known as theobromine, that dogs are unable to metabolize effectively. If they eat chocolate, the theobromine can remain in their bloodstream's for up to 20 hours, and these animals may experience fast heart rate, hallucinations, severe diarrhea, epileptic seizures, heart attacks, internal bleeding, and eventually death. It only takes a small amount of chocolate to cause damage. In case of accidental intake of chocolate contact a veterinarian.



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More Common Poisons :

Antifreeze: Easily one of the most dangerous poisons your dog can run into is antifreeze – it is so poisonous that just a few licks can lead to death in just hours. Dogs, and even all animals, are attracted to the antifreeze through its sweet smelling and palatable taste and will lap it up unknowing of the danger. Lethal doses for a medium sized dog breed start at just less than a couple of ounces. If you suspect your pet has been poisoned by antifreeze, it is critical to take him or her to the vet immediately. Within just hours your dogs liver will begin metabolizing the toxin more toxic substances that will lead to organ failure.

Snail & Slug Bait or Snail Poison : Extremely Toxic to Dogs Snail bait is very dangerous and many dogs get stricken with easily as they commonly lick the grass through their curious nature. Snail poison is made with arsenic and metaldehyde, also found in ant poison, insecticides, and weed killers. Signs and symptoms include drooling and thirst, diarrhea, vomiting, and confusion. If you suspect your pet has been poisoned by snail bait, take him or her to the doctor right away – as death is very quick. Even after your dog has been treated, they might still be lethargic for weeks afterward.

Mushrooms : Mushrooms can also be poisonous. The most common account of poisoning by mushroom is the Amanita phalloides and is extremely toxic. Symptoms include mild vomiting and diarrhea and can lead to more sever digestive problems, neurological disorders as well as liver disease. Common treatment for mushroom poisoning is to induce vomiting followed with activated charcoal. If your dog thinks he is a cow or something and grazes on grass, be sure to clean the mushrooms of the ground unless you know for sure they are safe.

Onions : Onion poisoning is rare but does happen if your dog eats large amounts of it, or sustains regular feeding of onion in small amounts. Onions contain a toxic ingredient called thiosulphate and poisoning occurs in the form of hemolytic anemia, a dangerous condition where the red blood cells burst open throughout the blood stream. Poisoned dogs will have symptoms of gastroenteritis which causes vomiting and diarrhea. Other signs will show in their urine as the red pigment of the blood cells will stain the urine. If your dog shows any sign of this, be sure to discontinue any onion in his or her diet and call your vet.

Garlic : Much like onions, Garlic contains thiosulphate, the dangerous toxin that poisons dogs. However garlic is also good for dogs in small amounts as it acts as a natural flea repellent. Use garlic in tiny portions and in strict moderation.

Grapes and Raisins : Both grapes and raisins are poisonous to dogs and are potentially fatal if you dog ingests a large amount. For years raisins were actually used as treats for dogs until dogs across the country died and their cases logged into databases. Trends were finally recorded and connections were made. Grape and raisin poisoning develops an acute renal kidney failure which leads to death. The first signs of poisoning occur with a few short hours of ingestions and are vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain and dogs become lethargic and subdued. The more the toxins effect their kidneys, the less they produce urine – at which point death follows shortly. If you believe your dog has eaten grapes, call your vet immediately for advice.

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS, poisonous if eaten or otherwise inhaled : Antifreeze, Aspirin, Bleach, Boric Acid, Brake Fluid, Cleaning Fluids, Cigarettes, Deodorants, Deodorisers, Detergents, Disinfectants, Drain Cleaner, Dye, Fungicides, Furniture Polish, Hair colourings, Herbicides, Insecticides, Kerosene, Laxatives, Lead, Matches, Metal Polish, Moth Balls, Petrol, Nail Varnish and Remover, Paint and Remover, Perming solutions, Phenol, Rat poison, Rubbing Alcohol, Shoe Polish, Sleeping Pills, Soap, Sugar Free Gum, Suntan lotions, Tar, Tinsel, Turpentine, Wood stains.

Also please note that nicotine patches are toxic and so is nicotine chewing gum. 10mg per 1kg is a toxic dose.



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Emergency Procedures - What to Do if Your Dog Gets Poisoned

If your pet accidentally ingests any type of natural, plant or chemical poison, call your veterinarian right away for advice. If you suspect your pet has had a particularly lethal amount, take he or she to the vet right away. Other contacts: You can also try calling your local poison control center. Without witnessing exposure or ingestion of a poisonous substance, poisoning can be difficult to diagnose. Signs to watch for vary depending on the type of poison and type of exposure. Some poisons are inhaled and a few are absorbed, but the majority are ingested.

What to Watch For : Lethargy or sluggishness, Vomiting, Lack of appetite, Stumbling or staggering, Breathing difficulty, Seizure

Diagnosing illness due to poisoning can be difficult if the exposure or ingestion was not witnessed. Sometimes, pets are treated based on a strong suspicion of poisoning and not a confirmed diagnosis. Due to the variety of poisons, specific tests to diagnose the exact poison are often not available. A high level of suspicion of a specific poison may be the only way to determine the best treatment.

Preventative Advice

- Keep all prescription and over-the-counter medications out of your pets' reach, preferably in closed/locked cabinets above the counter. Painkillers, cold medicines, antidepressants, vitamins and diet pills can be lethal to animals, even in small doses.
- Read all of the information on the label before using a product on your pet or in your home. If a product is for use only on dogs, it should never be used on cats; if a product is for use only on cats, it should never be used on dogs.
- Be aware of the plants you have in your home and yard. The ingestion of azalea, oleander, sago palm or yew plant material, among others, by your pet can be fatal. Easter lily, day lily, tiger lily and some other lily species can cause kidney failure in cats.
- Make sure your pets do not go on lawns or in gardens treated with fertilizers, herbicides or insecticides until they have dried completely. Always store such products in areas that are inaccessible to your pets. If you are uncertain about the usage of any product, ask the manufacturer and/or your veterinarian for instructions.
- Be alert for antifreeze/coolant leaking from your vehicle. Animals are attracted to the sweet taste and ingesting just a small amount can cause an animal's death.
- When using rat, mouse, snail or slug baits, or ant or roach traps, place the products in that are inaccessible to your pet. Some bait contains sweet smelling inert ingredients, such as jelly, peanut butter or sugar that can attract your pets.



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