

Protect Pets from Poisoning

This information was prepared by the Technical Service staff of LLOYD, Inc., Shenandoah, Iowa, with reference to the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center's web site.



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LLOYD, Inc. of Iowa
P.O. Box 130
Shenandoah, IA 51601, USA
1-800-831-0004
www.lloydinc.com



Dogs and cats may ingest ordinary household products that are commonly stored in the house or garage. Unfortunately, many of these substances are toxic and as such should be stored safely away from pet access. Some plants found in the house or yard are also poisonous to pets when consumed. If a pet ingests a potentially dangerous chemical compound or plant, seek immediate veterinary attention. Clinical signs may be immediate or delayed by hours or even days so it is important to get a proper veterinary assessment before permanent damage is incurred.



Common Sources of Pet Toxicity

When a poisoning is suspected, it is important to stay calm. When dealing with a suspected poisoning it is best to identify the source, the time of exposure and any unusual signs your pet is displaying. If possible, estimate the amount of toxin ingested and have the source container available. If you suspect your pet was poisoned by pest extermination agents or other products resulting from home repair and maintenance, have the relevant contact information available in the event the service provider can elaborate on the toxic substance.

When it is impossible to identify a specific poison, your veterinarian will treat your pet on the basis of clinical signs. In some cases the signs are distinct enough to allow specific identification of the poison. Regardless, successful treatment is based on prompt veterinary care, so do not delay contacting your veterinarian.

Activated charcoal, the universal antidote, is one of the most effective agents available. It is administered orally and functions by adsorbing toxic compounds directly from the gastrointestinal tract, thereby preventing absorption by the body. The inclusion of sorbitol, a mild cathartic, is available in cases your veterinarian deems prudent.



If you suspect your pet has ingested a potentially toxic substance, call your veterinarian immediately. Many toxicants can have fatal effects if not treated urgently.

Do not wait until your pet becomes symptomatic before contacting your veterinarian. Attempt to identify the toxin source once you have called your veterinarian or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center at 888-426-4435.

Potential Household Poisons

- Antifreeze containing ethylene glycol
- Bleach
- Fly bait
- Herbal supplements such as ma huang and other stimulants
- Human drugs, such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, cold medications containing pseudoephedrine
- Hydrocarbons (paint, polishes and fuel oils)
- Rodenticides
- Slug and snail bait

Foods to Avoid Feeding a Pet

- Alcoholic beverages
- Avocado
- Chocolate (all forms)
- Coffee (all forms)
- Fatty foods
- Macadamia nuts
- Moldy or spoiled foods
- Onions, onion powder, garlic
- Raisins and grapes
- Salt
- Yeast dough
- Xylitol sweetened products

Most Common Poisonous Plants

- Azalea/Rhododendron
- Castor Bean
- Cyclamen
- Foxglove
- Kalanchoe
- Lilies
- Marijuana
- Oleander
- Sago Palm
- Tulip/Narcissus bulbs
- Yew

Keys to Successful Treatment

- Do not panic, stay calm and gather as much information as possible concerning the incident
- Determine to what poison the pet was exposed
- Determine the amount of the poison the pet ingested (or was exposed to by other means)
- Try to determine the time the exposure occurred
- Note the time when signs of poisoning started
- Collect the poison container and packaging for reference
- Consult your veterinarian or an emergency veterinary clinic