



What are common poisonous items to avoid to keep your pet healthy and safe?

With so many familiar plants and household products being toxic to our pets, SAGE wants to take this opportunity to help educate pet owners about common items that should be stored safely and kept away from animals.

Human Foods

Most people know that chocolate, coffee and caffeine can be toxic to dogs, but there are other, lesser known dangers in our kitchens. Grapes and raisins, for instance, have been shown to cause kidney failure in some dogs. Other human foods that can be toxic to dogs include garlic, onions and nuts. Eating compost has been known to cause tremors in pets.

Xylitol, a sugar substitute traditionally found in gum, candy, and dental products, is now being used in other food products, at coffee stands, and in baked goods and some brands of peanut butter. Always check the ingredient label before giving peanut butter to your pet. The Animal Society for the Prevention and Cruelty of Animals (ASPCA) has a comprehensive list of foods to avoid feeding your pet:

<https://www.aspca.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/people-foods-avoid-feeding-your-pets>



Human Medications & Cosmetics

Many medications, both those prescribed and those available over-the-counter, can cause serious harm to pets if ingested. Even small amounts of drugs like ibuprofen or naproxen can lead to gastrointestinal ulcers or kidney failure. Tylenol (acetaminophen) ingestion can also cause life-threatening illness, more so for cats than dogs. Stimulants, such as Adderall for treatment of ADD, can potentially cause hyperactivity, tremors and seizures, fever, and abnormal heart rate in pets.

Cosmetics like soap, petroleum jelly, and topical creams and ointments, can also cause harm to pets. Keep these items away from where pets can reach them.

Pet Medications

We also regularly see pets who get into their own medication and swallow dangerous amounts of Rimadyl (and other pain medications), cardiac and seizure medications, and incontinence drugs. Store medications in closed bottles away from pets and clean up any spilled or dropped medication.

Rodenticides

Rodenticides are poisons used to control rodent (mice and rat) populations. Unfortunately, all rat poisons are toxic to dogs and cats, too. One of the most dangerous types of rat baits contains Bromethalin, which causes brain swelling, paralysis, and death if ingested. Other types of rat baits can cause bleeding disorders. If you are not sure if your dog has ingested rat poison, you may notice discolored blue or green stool. Pets suspected of rat bait toxicity should see a veterinarian immediately.



Insecticides

Most pesticides or insecticides are just mild irritants that can affect pets when they walk through an area treated with lawn or garden products. One instance of insecticide exposure, though, can be fatal for cats. That occurs when a cat is treated with a flea and tick preventative meant for dogs. Canine preventatives include pyrethrins, a component that can cause adverse reactions in cats, including respiratory distress and tremors. When protecting your cat from fleas and ticks, be sure to read over the medication packaging carefully to make sure it's meant for cats.



Household Products

We use a variety of cleaning agents in our homes; our pets interact with these chemicals, too. Some are not expected to cause any problems, while others could be toxic if ingested. For example, something as seemingly benign as a dryer sheet could cause signs of drooling, vomiting, and oral ulcers in pets. The ASPCA provides a detailed list of household products that require judicious use or research: <https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/poisonous-household-products>

The Pet Poison Helpline provides an additional resource: <http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com/poisons/>

Marijuana

Signs of marijuana intoxication typically appear within an hour, with the most common signs being depression, incoordination, dilated pupils, sound/light sensitivity, and sometimes urine leakage. Depending on the amount ingested, signs may last for as little as a few hours up to several days. Treatment includes placement in a quiet area, hydration support, and nausea relief. Fortunately, most pets typically recover with no long-term adverse effects.

Toxic Plants

There are quite a few poisonous plants that can pose serious danger to pets. Poisonous mushrooms are prevalent in parks, backyards and along hiking trails. Lilies are among the most dangerous to cats, as ingestion of the leaf or even the pollen can cause severe, acute kidney failure.

Other plants such as azaleas, daffodils, or oleander can also cause serious clinical signs in pets. If you want help putting together a pet-safe yard or garden, the ASPCA has put together a comprehensive toxic and non-toxic plant list.

Visit: <http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/toxic-and-non-toxic-plants>



For More Information

It's our responsibility to do our best to keep our pets safe. Thankfully, there is plenty of information available to help us. The ASPCA website at www.asPCA.org is an excellent source, and they have a helpful mobile app, too. You can reach the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center at (888) 426-4435. You can also reach the Pet Poison Helpline at (855) 764-7661.

SAGE Centers veterinarians are also here to help when you need advice. Our four hospitals are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including holidays.

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