

Common Pet Toxins



Chocolate

Toxin: Theobromine and caffeine.

The more cocoa that is in the chocolate, the more toxic it is. Cooking chocolate is seven times more toxic than milk chocolate.

Symptoms: Seen within hours of ingestion - excitability, fast heart rate, tremoring, vomiting, diarrhoea, seizures and death.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.



Onion and garlic

Toxin: Disulfides.

Symptoms: Due to damage to the red blood cells - may be seen within 24 hours to several days after ingestion. Include pale gums, fast heart rate, rapid breathing, depression, weakness, red coloured urine, vomiting and diarrhoea.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention for supportive care.



Macadamia Nuts

Toxin: Unknown toxic compound.

Symptoms: Seen within 12 hours of ingestion. Include weakness, depression, vomiting, tremoring, pain, inability to stand up and pale gum colour. Symptoms will disappear within 2 days without treatment.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention for supportive care.



Grapes, Raisins, Sultanas

Toxin: Unknown toxic compound.

Symptoms: Include depression, vomiting, disinterest in food, pain, diarrhoea, increased drinking or urination. Signs are due to kidney failure.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.



Yeast Dough

Toxin: Ethanol - heat causes dough to expand in the stomach and the process produces alcohol.

Symptoms: Include abdominal pain, bloating of the abdomen, difficulty walking, depression, coma and possible death.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.



Chewing Gum

Toxin: Xylitol.

Symptoms: Seen within 30 minutes to 12 hours from ingestion. Include vomiting, depression, difficulty standing or walking, seizures and possible liver failure.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.



Lilies

Toxin: Unknown toxic compound in Liliium and Hemerocallis spp. The entire plant is toxic. Cats are exceptionally susceptible to

toxicity.

Symptoms: Include vomiting (often contains pieces of lily) and signs associated with kidney failure including disinterest in food, depression, vomiting, and no urination.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.



Wild Mushroom

Toxin: Unknown toxic compound.

Symptoms: Include depression, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, drooling, increased tear production, poor coordination, inappropriate toileting and collapse. In severe cases toxicity can lead to liver failure, kidney failure and death.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.



Paracetamol

Toxin: Paracetamol - cats are more sensitive to the medication.

Symptoms: Include blue coloured gums, breathing difficulty, swelling of the face, depression, vomiting, weakness, coma and death.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.



Cigarettes

Toxin: Nicotine.

Symptoms: Usually within 15-45 minutes of ingestion. Include excitation, fast breathing, drooling, vomiting, diarrhoea, twitching, depression, a fast heart rate, shallow breathing and can progress to collapse, coma and death.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.



Aspirin

Symptoms: Seen within 4-6 hours to several days after ingestion. Include depression, vomiting with or without blood, disinterest in food, rapid breathing, weakness, seizures,

coma and death. Toxicity may lead to liver and kidney failure.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.



Flea Products

Toxin: Various - carbamate, organophosphate, pyrethroids, ivermectin, milbemycins.

Cats are especially sensitive to some products; dog products should never be used on a cat.

Symptoms: Include breathing difficulty, increased tear production, drooling, vomiting, tremors, seizures, weakness, poor coordination, mental alteration, breathing problems and death.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.



Snail Pellets

Toxin: Methaldehyde, Methiocarb or iron EDTA.

Symptoms: Include depression, drooling, poor coordination, vomiting with or without blood, diarrhoea, passing black or bloody stool, rapid heart rate, rapid breathing, muscle tremors, seizures and death. Toxicity may also cause liver failure. Even products claiming to be "pet safe" can be toxic.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.



Mothballs

Toxin: Naphthalene.

Symptoms: Include vomiting, pale gums, fast heart rate, rapid breathing, depression, weakness, red coloured urine and seizures. Severe toxicity can cause liver and kidney failure.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.



Rat Poison

Toxin: Various - most commonly brodifacoums, bromadiolones, diphacinones, diphenadiones, chlorphacinones, valones, pidones,

warfarin and coumarin.

Symptoms: Seen 1 to 7 days after ingestion. Include lack of interest in food, coughing, depression, weakness, pale gums, black tarry stool, a bloody nose, vomiting blood, urinating blood, bleeding from the gums, breathing difficulty, lameness or excessive bleeding from wounds.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.



Anti-freeze

Toxin: Ethylene glycol.

Symptoms: Seen 30 minutes to 3 days after ingestion. Include nausea, vomiting, depression, poor coordination, seizures, diarrhoea, dehydration, coma and death.

Symptoms are due to kidney failure.

Recommendation: Seek veterinary attention immediately.