

Top Toxins for Your Dog

The veterinarians at Pet Poison Helpline have determined the “Top Ten List” of substances that may be poisonous to your pet dog. It's worth taking the time to make sure your pet does not have access to these in your home.

1. Foods – specifically chocolate, xylitol, and grapes/raisins.

Certain types of chocolate are very toxic to dogs. The chemical causing toxicity in chocolate is theobromine (a relative of caffeine). The darker, more bitter, and more concentrated the chocolate, the more dangerous it is. Many sugarless gums and candies contain xylitol, a sweetener that is dangerous to dogs. When ingested, even in small amounts, it can result in a life-threatening drop in blood sugar or even liver failure. Raisins and grapes are often overlooked as one of the most toxic foods to dogs, and can result in kidney failure.

2. Insecticides – including sprays and bait stations.

Ingestion of insecticides and pesticides, especially those that contain organophosphates (e.g., disulfoton, often found in rose-care products), can be life-threatening to dogs, even when ingested in small amounts.

3. Mouse and rat poison – rodenticides.

There are many types of chemicals in mouse and rat poisons and none are safe for your dog to consume. Depending on what type of chemical was ingested, signs of poisoning will vary but can include internal bleeding, brain swelling, kidney failure, or severe vomiting and bloat. Mouse and rat poisons also pose the potential for relay toxicity (secondary poisoning), meaning pets – and even wildlife – can be poisoned by eating dead rodents poisoned by rodenticides.

4. NSAIDs human drugs – such as ibuprofen, naproxen.

Common drugs including NSAIDs (e.g. Advil®, Aleve® and Motrin) can cause serious harm to dogs when ingested. These drugs may cause stomach and intestinal ulcers as well as potential kidney failure. The use of human NSAIDs in dogs is dangerous and these drugs should never be given without consulting a veterinarian.

5. Household cleaners – sprays, detergents, polishes.

Strong acidic or alkaline cleaners pose the highest risk due to their corrosive nature, and include common household products like toilet bowl cleaners, lye, drain cleaners, rust removers, and calcium/lime removers. Remember that “natural” does not necessarily mean safe. Even some natural products can cause severe reactions. While general cleaners like glass products, spot removers and most surface cleaners have a wide margin of safety, it is still wise to keep them out of reach.

6. Antidepressant human drugs – such as Prozac, Paxil, Celexa and Effexor.

Of all prescription medications, antidepressants account for the highest number of calls to Pet Poison Helpline. When ingested, they can cause neurological problems in dogs like sedation, incoordination, agitation, tremors and seizures.

7. Fertilizers – including bone meal, blood meal and iron-based products.

While some fertilizers are fairly safe, certain organic products that contain blood meal, bone meal, feather meal and iron may be especially tasty – and dangerous – to dogs. Large ingestions can cause severe pancreatitis or even form a concretion in the stomach, obstructing the gastrointestinal tract.

8. Acetaminophen human drugs – such as Tylenol and cough/cold medications.

Ingestions of acetaminophen can lead to severe liver failure in dogs.

9. Amphetamine human drugs – ADD/ADHD medications like Adderall and Concerta.

Medications used to treat ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) and ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) contain potent stimulants, such as amphetamines and methylphenidate. Even minimal ingestion by dogs can cause life-threatening tremors, seizures, elevated body temperatures and heart problems.

10. Veterinary pain relievers – specifically COX-2 inhibitors like Rimadyl, Dermaxx and Previcox.

Carprofen, more commonly known by its trade name Rimadyl, is a veterinary-specific, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug. While it is commonly used for osteoarthritis, inflammation, and pain control in dogs, if over-ingested in large amounts, it can result in severe gastric ulceration and acute kidney failure in dogs.

If you suspect your pet has ingested a potentially toxic substance, call your veterinarian or the Pet Poison Helpline at **855-764-7661**. If you suspect your dog has ingested a drug, and the label on that drug is legible, give this information to the Pet Poison Representative. Never hesitate to call us, as Longwood Veterinary Center provides emergency appointments during all business hours and an overnight ICU nurse Monday through Friday.

Information on pet toxins Obtained from: <http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com>

For a complete list of toxic substances check out: <http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com/poisons/>