

# **ANIMAL 911**

**ASPCA Poison Control Center (open 24/7, 365 days a year)**

(888) 426-4435

\$65 consultation fee (\*this fee covers any additional calls pertaining to the current case, they provide a follow-up number during initial call should the need arise for any follow-up calls)

## **Info they will need: (for each pet involved)**

- Breed
- Age
- Sex
- Weight
- Symptoms
- Agent (toxin/poison) \*Container/packaging for reference for specifics
- Amount of agent ingested
- Time elapsed since ingested

## **Items for At-Home Pet Emergency Kit**

- Fresh bottle of hydrogen peroxide, 3% USP (to induce vomiting)
- A turkey baster, bulb syringe, or large medicine syringe (to administer peroxide)
- Saline eye solution
- Artificial tears (to lubricate eyes after flushing)
- Mild grease-cutting dishwashing liquid (for bathing an animal after skin contamination)
- Diphenhydramine tablets 25mg (Benadryl – NO other combo ingredients)
- Rubber Gloves
- Forceps (to remove stingers)
- A Muzzle (to protect against fear – or excitement-induced biting)
- A can of pets favorite wet food
- Sweet electrolyte-containing beverage
- Corn syrup
- A pet carrier



## **Common Toxins/Poisons**

- Insecticides/Insect Control Products/Baits
  - o flea/tick products
  - o fly baits containing methomyl
  - o slug/snail baits containing metaldehyde)
- Cleaning Supplies/Detergents/Fabric Softener Sheets/Mothballs
- Antifreeze
- Pennies (\*high concentration of zinc)
- Essential Oils (i.e. tea tree oil)
- Animals (toads, insects, spiders, snake, scorpions)
- Blue-green algae (ponds)
- Citronella candles
- Cocoa mulch
- Compost piles/Fertilizers
- Plant bulbs
- Swimming-pool treatment supplies
- Batteries

## **Holiday-Related:**

- Christmas tree water and needles (\*can contain fertilizers and bacteria that can cause GI upset)
- Mistletoe
- Electrical cords
- Ribbons/Tinsel/Strings
- Batteries
- Glass ornaments, ornament fasteners
- Liquid potpourri
- Bones (turkey, chicken)

## **Non-Toxic but can cause problems (most commonly GI upset and/or blockages):**

- Water-based paints
- Toilet bowl water
- Silica gel (little packets of beads in items such as medications, leather goods, vitamins and even some pasta products, usually labeled “DESSICANT—DO NOT EAT!”; can also be found in some kitty litter)
- Cat litter (when ingested)
- Glue traps
- Glow jewelry
- Poinsettia



## Rx and OTC Medications:

- **NSAIDs (e.g., ibuprofen, naproxen)**—Topping our list are the common household medications called non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs), which include common names such as ibuprofen (e.g., Advil and some types of Motrin) and naproxen (e.g., Aleve). While these medications are safe for people, even one or two pills can cause serious harm to a pet. Dogs, cats, birds and other small mammals including ferrets, gerbils, and hamsters may develop serious stomach and intestinal ulcers as well as kidney failure. **Ibuprofen** (Advil®, Motrin®) is the most common human medication ingested by pets. Many brands have a sweet outer coating that makes it appealing to pets (think "M&M," but a potentially deadly one). Ibuprofen can cause stomach ulcers and kidney failure. **Naproxen** (Aleve®, Naprosyn®) is an over-the-counter pain reliever. Dogs and cats are very sensitive to naproxen and even small amounts can cause stomach ulcers and kidney failure.
- **Acetaminophen**—(Tylenol®) When it comes to pain medications, acetaminophen is popular. Even though this drug is safe for children, it is not safe for pets—especially cats. One regular strength tablet of acetaminophen may cause damage to a cat's red blood cells, limiting their ability to carry oxygen. In dogs, acetaminophen leads to liver failure and, in large doses, red blood cell damage.
- **Tramadol** (Ultram®) is a pain reliever. Your veterinarian may prescribe it for your pet, but only at a dose that's appropriate for your pet – never give your medication to your pet without first consulting your veterinarian! Too much tramadol can cause sedation or agitation, wobbliness, disorientation, vomiting, tremors and possibly seizures.
- **Aspirin** (\*unless specifically directed by Veterinarian – can cause GI ulcers and interact with other medications)
- **Benzodiazepines and sleep aids (e.g., Xanax, Klonopin, Ambien, Lunesta)**—These medications are designed to reduce anxiety and help people sleep better. However, in pets, they may have the opposite effect. About half of dogs that ingest sleep aids become agitated instead of sedate. In addition, these drugs may cause severe lethargy, incoordination (including walking “drunk”), and slowed breathing in pets. In cats, some forms of benzodiazepines can cause liver failure when ingested. **Alprazolam** (Xanax®) is prescribed as an anti-anxiety medication and a sleep-aid. Most pets that ingest alprazolam can become sleepy and wobbly; however a few will become very agitated instead. These pills are commonly ingested by pets as people put them out on the nightstand so they remember to take them. Large doses of alprazolam can drop the blood pressure and could cause weakness or collapse. **Zolpidem** (Ambien®) is a sleep-aid for people. Pets commonly eat pills left on the bedside table. Zolpidem may make cats wobbly and sleepy, but most pets become very agitated and develop elevated heart rates. **Clonazepam** (Klonopin®) is used as an anticonvulsant and anti-anxiety medication. It is sometimes also prescribed as a sleep-aid. When animals ingest clonazepam they can become sleep and wobbly. Too much clonazepam can lower the blood pressure, leading to weakness or collapse
- **Antidepressants (e.g., Effexor, Cymbalta, Prozac, Lexapro)**—While these and other antidepressant drugs are occasionally used in pets, overdoses can lead to serious neurological problems such as sedation, incoordination, tremors and seizures. Some antidepressants also have a stimulant effect leading to a dangerously elevated heart rate, blood pressure, and body temperature. Pets, especially cats, seem to enjoy the taste of Effexor and often eat the entire pill.

- (Cymbalta®) is prescribed as an antidepressant and anti-anxiety agent. When ingested by pets it can cause agitation, vocalization, tremors and seizures.
- Venlafaxine (Effexor®)** is an antidepressant. For some unknown reason, cats love to eat the capsules. Ingestion can cause agitation, vocalization, tremors and seizures.
- **ADD and ADHD medications (e.g., Concerta, Adderall, Ritalin)**—Medications used to treat Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder contain potent stimulants such as amphetamines and methylphenidate. Even minimal ingestions of these medications by pets can cause life-threatening tremors, seizures, elevated body temperatures, and heart problems. **Adderall®** – Adderall® is a combination of four different amphetamines and is used to treat Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in children. This medication doesn't have the same effect in pets as it does in people; it acts as a stimulant in our pets and causes elevated heart rate and body temperature, along with hyperactivity, tremors and seizures.
  - **Birth control (e.g., estrogen, estradiol, progesterone)**—Birth control pills often come in packages that dogs find irresistible. Thankfully, small ingestions of these medications typically do not cause trouble. However, large ingestions of estrogen and estradiol can cause bone marrow suppression, particularly in birds. Additionally, intact female pets are at an increased risk of side effects from estrogen poisoning.
  - **ACE Inhibitors (e.g., Zestril, Altace)**—Angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors are commonly used to treat high blood pressure in people and, occasionally, pets. Though overdoses can cause low blood pressure, dizziness, and weakness, this category of medication is typically safe. Pets ingesting small amounts of this medication can potentially be monitored at home, unless they have kidney failure or heart disease.
  - **Beta-blockers (e.g., Tenormin, Toprol, Coreg)**—Beta-blockers are also used to treat high blood pressure but, unlike with ACE inhibitors, small ingestions of these drugs may cause serious poisoning in pets. Overdoses can cause life-threatening decreases in blood pressure and a very slow heart rate.
  - **Thyroid hormones (e.g., Armour desiccated thyroid, Synthroid)**—Pets—especially dogs—get underactive thyroids too. Interestingly, the dose of thyroid hormone needed to treat dogs is much higher than a person's dose. Therefore, if dogs accidentally get into thyroid hormones at home, it rarely results in problems. However, large acute overdoses in cats and dogs can cause muscle tremors, nervousness, panting, a rapid heart rate, and aggression.
  - **Cholesterol lowering agents (e.g., Lipitor, Zocor, Crestor)**—These popular medications, often called statins, are commonly used in the United States. While pets do not typically get high cholesterol, they may still get into the pill bottle. Thankfully, most statin ingestions only cause mild vomiting or diarrhea. Serious side effects from these drugs come with long-term use, not one-time ingestions.
  - **Cold medicines**
  - **Anti-cancer drugs**
  - **Vitamins**
  - **Diet Pills**

## Foods:

- **Chocolate, Coffee, Caffeine** These products all contain substances called methylxanthines, which are found in cacao seeds, the fruit of the plant used to make coffee and in the nuts of an extract used in some sodas. When ingested by pets, methylxanthines can cause vomiting and diarrhea, panting, excessive thirst and urination, hyperactivity, abnormal heart rhythm, tremors, seizures and even death. Note that darker chocolate is more dangerous than milk chocolate. White chocolate has the lowest level of methylxanthines, while baking chocolate contains the highest.
- **Alcohol** Alcoholic beverages and food products containing alcohol can cause vomiting, diarrhea, decreased coordination, central nervous system depression, difficulty breathing, tremors, abnormal blood acidity, coma and even death.
  - o **Hops** Cultivated hops used for brewing beer have been associated with potentially life-threatening signs in dogs who have ingested them. Both fresh and spent (cooked) hops have been implicated in poisoning dogs. Affected dogs develop an uncontrollably high body temperature (often greater than 108 degrees Fahrenheit), which results in damage to and failure of multiple organ systems. Dogs poisoned by hops become restless, pant excessively, and may have muscle tremors and seizures. Prompt veterinary intervention is necessary to prevent death in these dogs.
- **Avocado** The leaves, fruit, seeds and bark of avocados contain Persin, which can cause vomiting and diarrhea in dogs. Birds and rodents are especially sensitive to avocado poisoning, and can develop congestion, difficulty breathing and fluid accumulation around the heart. Some ingestions may even be fatal.
- **Macadamia Nuts** Macadamia nuts are commonly used in many cookies and candies. However, they can cause problems for your canine companion. These nuts have caused weakness, depression, vomiting, tremors and hyperthermia in dogs. Signs usually appear within 12 hours of ingestion and last approximately 12 to 48 hours.
- **Grapes & Raisins** Although the toxic substance within grapes and raisins is unknown, these fruits can cause kidney failure. In pets who already have certain health problems, signs may be more dramatic.
- **Yeast Dough** Yeast dough can rise and cause gas to accumulate in your pet's digestive system. This can be painful and can cause the stomach or intestines to rupture. Because the risk diminishes after the dough is cooked and the yeast has fully risen, pets can have small bits of bread as treats. However, these treats should not constitute more than 5 percent to 10 percent of your pet's daily caloric intake.
- **Raw/Undercooked Meat, Eggs and Bones** Raw meat and raw eggs can contain bacteria such as *Salmonella* and *E. coli* that can be harmful to pets. In addition, raw eggs contain an enzyme called avidin that decreases the absorption of biotin (a B vitamin), which can lead to skin and coat problems. Feeding your pet raw bones may seem like a natural and healthy option that might occur if your pet lived in the wild. However, this can be very dangerous for a domestic pet, who might choke on bones, or sustain a grave injury should the bone splinter and become lodged in or puncture your pet's digestive tract.
- **Xylitol** Xylitol is used as a sweetener in many products, including gum, candy,

can lead to liver failure. The increase in insulin leads to hypoglycemia (lowered sugar levels). Initial signs of toxicosis include vomiting, lethargy and loss of coordination. Signs can progress to recumbancy and seizures. Elevated liver enzymes and liver failure can be seen within a few days. Most chewing gums and breath mints typically contain 0.22-1.0 gram of xylitol per piece of gum or per mint. **Therefore, only one piece of gum may result in hypoglycemia in a 10 pound (4.5 kg) dog.** Hypoglycemia is typically evident within 1-2 hours of xylitol ingestion but, in rare cases, has been delayed as much as 12 hours.

- **Onions, Garlic, Chives** These vegetables and herbs can cause gastrointestinal irritation and could lead to red blood cell damage. Although cats are more susceptible, dogs are also at risk if a large enough amount is consumed. Toxicity is normally diagnosed through history, clinical signs and microscopic confirmation of Heinz bodies. An occasional low dose, such as what might be found in pet foods or treats, likely will not cause a problem, but we recommend that you do NOT give your pets large quantities of these foods.
- **Milk** Because pets do not possess significant amounts of lactase (the enzyme that breaks down lactose in milk), milk and other milk-based products cause them diarrhea or other digestive upset.
- **Salt** Large amounts of salt can produce excessive thirst and urination, or even sodium ion poisoning in pets. Signs that your pet may have eaten too many salty foods include vomiting, diarrhea, depression, tremors, elevated body temperature, seizures and even death. In other words, keep those salty chips to yourself!
- **Fruit Pits/Seeds**

## Plants:

### **Lilies**



Members of the *Lilium spp.* are considered to be highly toxic to cats. While the poisonous component has not yet been identified, it is clear that with even ingestions of very small amounts of the plant, severe kidney damage could result.

### **Peace Lily (AKA Mauna Loa Peace Lily)**



*Spathiphyllum* contains calcium oxalate crystals that can cause oral irritation, excessive drooling, vomiting, difficulty in swallowing and intense burning and irritation of the mouth, lips and tongue in pets who ingest.

### **Marijuana**



Ingestion of *Cannabis sativa* by companion animals can result in depression of the central nervous system and incoordination, as well as vomiting, diarrhea, drooling, increased heart rate, and even seizures and coma.

### **Sago Palm**



All parts of *Cycas Revoluta* are poisonous, but the seeds or "nuts" contain the largest amount of toxin. The ingestion of just one or two seeds can result in very serious effects, which include vomiting, diarrhea, depression, seizures and liver failure.

## Tulip/Narcissus bulbs



The bulb portions of *Tulipa/Narcissus spp.* contain toxins that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation, drooling, loss of appetite, depression of the central nervous system, convulsions and cardiac abnormalities.

## Azalea/Rhododendron



Members of the *Rhododendron spp.* contain substances known as grayantoxins, which can produce vomiting, drooling, diarrhea, weakness and depression of the central nervous system in animals. Severe azalea poisoning could ultimately lead to coma and death from cardiovascular collapse.

## Oleander



All parts of *Nerium oleander* are considered to be toxic, as they contain cardiac glycosides that have the potential to cause serious effects—including gastrointestinal tract irritation, abnormal heart function, hypothermia and even death.

## Castor Bean



The poisonous principle in *Ricinus communis* is ricin, a highly toxic protein that can



and loss of appetite. Severe cases of poisoning can result in dehydration, muscle twitching, tremors, seizures, coma and death.

### **Cyclamen**



*Cyclamen* species contain cyclamine, but the highest concentration of this toxic component is typically located in the root portion of the plant. If consumed, *Cyclamen* can produce significant gastrointestinal irritation, including intense vomiting. Fatalities have also been reported in some cases.

### **Kalanchoe**



This plant contains components that can produce gastrointestinal irritation, as well as those that are toxic to the heart, and can seriously affect cardiac rhythm and rate.

### **Yew**



*Taxus spp.* contains a toxic component known as taxine, which causes central nervous system effects such as trembling, incoordination, and difficulty breathing. It can also cause significant gastrointestinal irritation and cardiac failure, which can result in death.

### **Amaryllis**



Common garden plants popular around Easter, *Amaryllis* species contain toxins that can cause vomiting, depression, diarrhea, abdominal pain, hypersalivation, anorexia and tremors.

## Autumn Crocus



Ingestion of *Colchicum autumnale* by pets can result in oral irritation, bloody vomiting, diarrhea, shock, multi-organ damage and bone marrow suppression.

## Chrysanthemum



These popular blooms are part of the *Compositae* family, which contain pyrethrins that may produce gastrointestinal upset, including drooling, vomiting and diarrhea, if eaten. In certain cases depression and loss of coordination may also develop if enough of any part of the plant is consumed.

## English Ivy



Also called branching ivy, glacier ivy, needlepoint ivy, sweetheart ivy and California ivy, *Hedera helix* contains triterpenoid saponins that, should pets ingest, can result in vomiting, abdominal pain, hypersalivation and diarrhea.

## Pothos



Pothos (both *Scindapsus* and *Epipremnum*) belongs to the Araceae family. If chewed or ingested, this popular household plant can cause significant mechanical irritation and

## Schefflera



*Schefflera* and *Brassaia actinophylla* contain calcium oxalate crystals that can cause oral irritation, excessive drooling, vomiting, difficulty in swallowing and intense burning and irritation of the mouth, lips and tongue in pets who ingest.

## **Amanita phalloides (Death Cap Mushroom)**



*Amanita phalloides*, the death cap mushroom, accounts for more than 50% of all mushroom-associated deaths in people and most of the reported fatal cases in dogs. Typically, 10 to 12 hours pass between consumption and the onset of clinical signs. There are three distinct sequential phases of cyclopeptide poisoning. The initial gastroenteritis phase is characterized by profuse bloody diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, abdominal pain, dehydration, electrolyte imbalance, fever, tachycardia, and hyperglycemia. This phase typically lasts about 24 hours. The resolution of clinical signs and subclinical elevations of serum alanine transaminase and aspartate transaminase activities characterize the onset of the 12- to 24-hour latent phase. The final—and often terminal—hepatorenal phase of poisoning begins three to four days after ingestion. Severe hepatic dysfunction, severe renal failure, cerebral edema, icterus, elevated serum hepatic enzyme activities, hypoglycemia, coagulopathies and hemorrhage, azotemia, metabolic acidosis, and sepsis characterize the hepatorenal phase. In addition, neurologic dysfunction including hepatic encephalopathy and coma can occur. Typically, the animal dies three to seven days after ingestion.