



Which Substances are Poisonous to Pets?

Did you know that many substances that are found in and around your home can be dangerous to your pets?

If you have any doubt about something your pet has eaten, please telephone the surgery immediately. If we do not have the information immediately to hand, we will contact the National Poisons Information Service for further information. The earlier you get in touch, the more we are able to do.

Even if you are sure we will need to examine your pet, please telephone the surgery first, before you leave home, then we can prepare for your arrival. If your pet has eaten a chemical product, or drug, please have the container with you when you phone and bring it to the surgery with you. Do not try to make your pet vomit or feed them anything before bringing them to the surgery as this can make matters worse.

Foods

Certain foods can be toxic to dogs and cats if eaten in significant quantities

- Alcoholic beverages
- Avocado
- Chocolate (100g for Spaniel dog)
- Coffee
- Fatty foods
- Macadamia nuts
- Moldy or spoiled foods
- Onions
- Raisins and grapes
- Salt
- Yeast dough



Drugs

Ibuprofen, Paracetamol and Aspirin are safe and commonly used medicines in people, but they can be deadly in animals. Every year we see animals who are unwell because they have eaten their owner's medication.

Please keep all over the counter medication – including cold cures, diet pills, antidepressants, vitamin pills etc in a closed cupboard out of your pet's reach. Do not give your pet any drug that has not been prescribed by



a veterinary surgeon. Pharmacists do not receive training on which medications are safe for animals and should not be asked for advice.

Recreational drugs can be dangerous for animals and should not be given. Cannabis can cause diarrhoea, drooling, increased heart rate, and even seizures and coma.

If you think your pet has taken any sort of drug, please contact the surgery for advice.

Fleas

Always read the label first before using any flea-control product on or around your pet. Flea treatments from your Vet are much more effective and much safer than pet shop products. It is important to dose accurately though – this is why we need to weigh your pet yearly to ensure they have the correct dose of flea treatment and wormers. When flea treatments are misused, problems may result; ranging from vomiting and diarrhoea to more serious effects such as difficulty breathing, muscle tremors and seizures (fits).



Never use a flea-control formula on your cat that's meant for dogs only, or vice versa. For example, there are several brands of flea-control products for canines that contain permethrin. Just a few drops of this chemical can be life threatening to cats. We commonly see cats who are very ill because of misused flea treatments.

The flea treatments that we use here at Ash Veterinary Surgery are all thoroughly tested to ensure they are safe for dogs, cats and rabbits.

Plants

They may be pretty, but many common houseplants can be poisonous to your pets, as can wild plants. If you're not sure about a particular species, place it out of reach until you check it is safe.



Many types of lily (*Lilium* and *Heimerocallis* species)— including the Easter lily, Tiger lily, Rubrum lily, Japanese show lily and some Day lilies—can cause kidney failure in cats if eaten. This can include leaves, flowers, pollen or even the water that the plant has been in. Take care with flower arrangements in the house as these may contain lilies too.

Some plants and trees, which grow in gardens, can be harmful to pets if eaten. It's a good idea to find out if a plant is safe before you plant it in the garden.

- Cardiotoxic plants (those that can affect the heart) include lily of the valley, oleander, rhododendron, azalea, yew and foxglove.
- Rhubarb leaves can cause kidney failure.
- Some species of mushrooms can result in liver failure.



Gardening

If you apply weed killer or insecticide to your garden, or fertilise your lawn, always follow label directions for proper application of these products, and do not allow pets access to these areas until the amount of time listed on the label by the manufacturer has passed and the product has dried thoroughly. Your pet could become exposed to these substances by licking her paws after walking through treated areas when wet or before access should be allowed.



Metaldehyde, the chemical in many types of slug pellets is very poisonous to cats and dogs. If your pet has access to the garden, use pellets which are safe for animals or use other means of slug control such as nematodes.

Cars

Antifreeze is essential for your car to run smoothly in the winter, but is very poisonous to cats and dogs – even small amounts can cause fits and kidney failure. Because it tastes sweet, cats and dogs will often drink it. Make sure you clean up spills from the vehicle immediately and consider switching to a propylene glycol-based antifreeze, which is significantly less toxic than conventional ethylene glycol antifreeze. In cold weather make sure you have fresh water available for your pet at all times, as may other water supplies may have frozen up.



Petrol and oil can also cause painful skin conditions if your pet gets some on their coat. If they groom oil off their coat, it can also make them ill.

DIY

Paints, paint-stripper and other chemicals used in DIY can be poisonous. Do not allow animals into a room you are decorating.

Household Cleaning

Many cleaning products can be poisonous, or may cause painful chemical burns on the skin or in the eyes or mouth. Keep all products in a cupboard out of the way of children and animals.

Rubbish Bins

Make sure your bins are pet proof. Not only could animals get access to dangerous chemicals in your rubbish, but they could choke on a bone, or cut themselves on a tin can.



If you are in any doubt about what is safe to use around your pets, please telephone the surgery before you use the product. At Ash Veterinary Surgery, we are happy to help.

With thanks to ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center