



Acton Animal Hospital
Acton, MA
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Pet Care News

Winter 2007



Acton Animal Hospital staff wishes our clients and our patients a happy, healthy 2007!

The Ten Most Common Toxicoses in Dogs

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- 1. Ibuprofen**—can cause digestive symptoms, kidney problems, and neurological signs.
- 2. Chocolate**—can cause digestive symptoms, cardiovascular effects, and neurological signs.
- 3. Ant and roach baits**—mild digestive symptoms and possible foreign body obstruction from the product container (most now contain less toxic ingredients.)
- 4. Rodenticides**—contain one of three main toxic ingredients:
 - Anticoagulants which can cause defective clotting mechanisms.
 - Bromethalin which can cause severe neurological signs.
 - Cholecalciferol which causes increased blood calcium and phosphorus leading to kidney problems.
- 5. Acetaminophen**—can cause liver toxicity, blood problems with hemoglobin, dry-eye condition, and swelling of the face and paws.
- 6. Pseudoephedrine**—(contained in many human cold medications) can cause cardiovascular effects and neurological signs.
- 7. Thyroid hormones**—(prescribed for people with thyroid conditions) can cause cardiovascular and neurological signs.
- 8. Bleach**—Household strength may cause mild mouth or esophageal burns. Commercial strength can cause severe corrosion to the linings of the pharynx, esophagus, or stomach. Respiratory signs can be caused from inhaling the fumes.
- 9. Fertilizer**—usually contain nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium which can cause digestive system symptoms. Additives to the fertilizers can cause other toxic signs.
- 10. Hydrocarbons**—(found in products such as paints, varnishes, furniture polish, lamp oils and paint removers) can cause digestive, respiratory, liver, kidney, and neurological signs even in small amounts.

Please protect your pet from these common toxicities by storing potentially harmful medications and products away from the reach of your pet. Call your veterinarian for advice on whether a human medication can safely be administered to your pet.

— continued

Pet Owners Beware–Xylitol Toxicity



Xylitol, an artificial sweetener used in sugarless gum, candy, toothpaste, baked goods, and other common products has been confirmed as a toxin. Since dogs like sweet tasting treats, they are more likely to ingest these items. Even a few pieces of gum could be toxic for a small dog weighing around twenty pounds.

Xylitol causes the pet's pancreas to produce high levels of insulin, resulting in a rapid decline in blood sugar (hypoglycemia). Symptoms may be seen in as little as thirty minutes following ingestion. Vomiting, weakness, uncoordinated movements, depressed attitude, seizures, and even coma may occur. Some dogs can suffer severe liver damage or even liver failure, which is more likely in a pet that has ingested large quantities of Xylitol.

If your pet has eaten a Xylitol-containing food or product, seek veterinary attention immediately. Your veterinarian may advise inducing vomiting if the problem is reported in less than an hour of the ingestion. Other treatments might include administration of activated charcoal and placement on intravenous fluids.

Careful monitoring of the patient for low blood sugar or hypokalemia (low blood potassium) should be done in order to identify if dextrose or potassium supplementation is needed.

Table Foods and Pets



You may be tempted to share your favorite rich table foods or treats with your pet, but this may cause digestive problems for your pet. Foods high in fats or sugars are not foods that your pet's digestive system is accustomed to handle. Vomiting, diarrhea, and loss of appetite are commonly seen signs after eating these foods.

Inflammation of the pancreas (pancreatitis) may also occur which is a more serious problem for your pet. Stick to feeding your pet his regular pet food diet. Use low fat treats or pet treats when you want to give your pet something special.

Call Ahead for Meds



Reminder to our clients: If you need prescription medications refilled for your pet or need to pick up more prescription pet foods, it is helpful if you **call us ahead of time** before arriving at the hospital. This little bit of notice will give us time to prepare your request and have it ready for your arrival, resulting in less waiting time for you. Thank you for your cooperation.
