

Pets and Poisons

Dogs, cats, and other pets may be at risk for poisoning, especially if left alone for hours at a time. Be aware of the following poisons in and around your home.

ALCOHOL

Their small size makes most pets unable to handle products containing alcohol. Don't give alcoholic beverages to pets or allow them to lick up spilled drinks. Also be aware that rising bread dough and desserts made with alcohol can be dangerous for pets as well.

AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS

Many of these products are very poisonous. Antifreeze, or coolant, has a sweet taste so many pets may eagerly lick it off the garage floor or driveway. As little as a tablespoonful can damage kidneys or even kill a small pet. Check your radiator hoses and clamps regularly for leaks. Make sure you clean up spills or leaks right away.

CHOCOLATE

This treat for humans can be a poison for pets! Dark and less sweet chocolates are more toxic for dogs. Baker's chocolate and dark chocolate pose the greatest risk of toxicity. Never feed foods made with chocolate to pets.

PLANTS

Many common indoor and outdoor plants can harm your pet. Examples include philodendron, daffodil, azalea, Easter lily, poinsettia, and dieffenbachia. Cats especially like to nibble on houseplants. Know the names of your plants and keep poisonous plants out of your pet's living areas.

PESTICIDES

Products used to kill insects and rodents can be dangerous. Carefully read and follow the instructions on the label when using a pesticide. Most baits are made with sugars or other foods so they can be very attractive to your pet. Put "bait" where your pet can't get to it and remove it promptly when no longer needed.

MEDICINES AND VITAMINS

Medicines and vitamins for people may not be safe for animals. Check with the veterinarian before giving your pet any prescription or over-the-counter medication. Also, never give medicines meant for one animal to another. Store medications out of reach and don't discard them in a trashcan that your pet can get into.

Keep chemicals and medicines in tightly closed containers locked away from your pets. Many items that are poisonous to humans can also harm pets. But there is a wide difference in reactions to chemicals among different animal species. It's not safe to assume that something harmless to humans will not cause problems for your pets. **Be prepared in case your pet is exposed to a poison.** Keep the telephone number of the poison center (800-222-1222), your veterinarian, and a local veterinary emergency center posted near your phone. If you suspect that your pet has been poisoned, call for help immediately.



VIRGINIA
POISON CENTER