

## Pet Poison Safety Tips

Please follow these guidelines to protect your animals from being exposed.

Be aware of the plants you have in your home and yard. The ingestion of many varieties can be fatal – see list below:

|                        |                        |                         |
|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Aloe                   | Deadly Nightshade (See | Lantana                 |
| Amaryllis              | Nightshade)            | Lacy Tree               |
| Andromeda Japonica     | Easter Lily            | Lily of the Valley      |
| Angel Trumpet (Datura) | Elephant Ears          | Macadamia Nut           |
| Asian Lily (Liliaceae) | Emerald Feather (aka   | Madagascar Dragon       |
| Asparagus Fern         | Emerald Fern)          | Tree                    |
| Australian Nut         | Emerald Fern (aka      | Marble Queen            |
| Autumn Crocus          | Emerald Feather)       | Marijuana               |
| Avocado                | English Ivy            | Mauna Loa Peace Lily    |
| Azalea                 | Fiddle-Leaf            | (aka Peace Lily)        |
| Bird of Paradise       | Philodendron           | Mexican Breadfruit      |
| American Bittersweet   | Flamingo Plant         | Mistletoe "American"    |
| European Bittersweet   | Florida Beauty         | Morning Glory           |
| Branching Ivy          | Foxglove               | Mother-in-Law           |
| Buckeye                | Fruit Salad Plant      | Narcissus               |
| Buddist Pine           | Glacier Ivy            | Needlepoint Ivy         |
| Caladium               | Gladiolas              | Nephthytis              |
| Calla Lily             | Glory Lily             | Nightshade              |
| Castor Bean            | Gold Dieffenbachia     | Oleander                |
| Ceriman (aka Cutleaf   | Gold Dust Dracaena     | Onion                   |
| Philodendron)          | Golden Pothos          | Orange Day Lily         |
| Charming Diffenbachia  | Green Gold Nephthysis  | Panda                   |
| Chinaberry Tree        | Hahn's self branching  | Peace Lily (aka Maana   |
| Chinese Evergreen      | English Ivy            | Loa Peace Lily)         |
| Christmas Rose         | Heartleaf Philodendron | Philodendron Pertusum   |
| Clematis               | Heavenly Bamboo        | Plumosa Fern            |
| Cordatum               | Holly                  | Precatory Bean          |
| Corn Plant (aka        | Horsehead              | Queensland Nut          |
| Cornstalk Plant)       | Philodendron           | Red Emerald             |
| Cornstalk Plant (aka   | Hurricane Plant        | Red Lily                |
| Corn Plant)            | Hyacinth               | Red-Margined            |
| Cutleaf Philodendron   | Hydrangea              | Dracaena (aka Straight- |
| (aka Ceriman)          | Iris                   | Margined Dracaena)      |
| Cycads                 | Japanese Show Lily     | Red Princess            |
| Cyclamen               | Japanese Yew (aka      | Rhododendron            |
| Daffodil               | Yew)                   | Ribbon Plant (Dracaena  |
| Day Lily               | Jerusalem Cherry       | sanderiana)             |
| Devil's Ivy            | Kalanchoe              | Rubrum Lily             |
| Dumb Cane              | Lace Fern              | Saddle Leaf             |
|                        |                        | Philodendron            |

|                    |                      |                        |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Sago Palm          | Taro Vine            | Variable Dieffenbachia |
| Satin Pothos       | Tiger Lily           | Variegated             |
| Schefflera         | Tomato Plant         | Philodendron           |
| Spotted Dumb Cane  | Tree Philodendron    | Warneckeii Dracaena    |
| Stargazer Lily     | Tropic Snow Dumbcane | Wood Lily              |
| Striped Dracaena   | Tulip                | Yew (aka Japanese Yew) |
| Sweetheart Ivy     |                      | Yucca                  |
| Swiss Cheese Plant |                      |                        |

When poison-proofing your home, be sure to get down to your pets' level to see their point of view. While everything may look safe from your perspective, your pets may be able to get into areas you can't see. Be as vigilant at poison-proofing your house for a pet as you would be for a child. Keep cleaning products in a high, closed cabinet. There should be nothing below counter level because liquid drain cleaners, as well as tub and tile cleaners, can be lethal. Also, take precautions in the garage. Bags of insecticide and auto care liquids need to be stored high off the ground.

Never allow your pets to have access to the areas in which cleaning agents are being used or stored. Cleaning agents have a variety of properties. Some may only cause mild stomach upset, but others can cause severe burns of the tongue, mouth and stomach.

When using rat, mouse, snail or slug baits or ant or roach traps, place the products in areas that are inaccessible to your companion animals. Most bait contains sweet-smelling ingredients, such as jelly, peanut butter or sugar that can attract your pets. Also be careful your pets do not eat the dead pests as the poison in the pest may also affect your pet.

Never give your companion animals medication for humans unless you are directed to do so by a veterinarian. Many medications that are safe for humans can be deadly for animals.

Keep all prescription and over-the-counter drugs out of your pet's reach, preferably in closed cabinets. Both over-the-counter and prescriptions drugs can be a problem. Very common over-the-counter painkillers such as Advil, Motrin and Tylenol, pseudoephedrine, and human doses of prescription drugs for depression such as Prozac and Effexor can be toxic to pets.

Painkillers, cold medications, anti-cancer drugs, antidepressants, vitamins and diet pills are all examples of human medications that can be lethal to animals, even in small doses.

If your dog bites into an asthma inhaler, it has the potential to result in acute, life-threatening poisoning. Inhalers contain highly-concentrated doses of drugs such as albuterol (a beta-agonist) and fluticasone (a steroid). If a dog punctures an inhaler by biting or gnawing it, s/he can be exposed to a massive single dose of a powerful drug which can bring on vomiting, agitation, heart arrhythmia, collapse and death.

A handbag or similar item lying open with contents exposed can prove an irresistible temptation to a confined, curious and perhaps slightly bored pet. Some items in a purse or handbag that can harm your dog are: human medications and/or human pills that come in bottles, which can sound like the noise some dog toys make; gum and mints; small bottles

of hand sanitizer; and cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, and other products containing nicotine. A small dog can die from ingesting just three cigarettes, depending on the brand. Chewing tobacco is also toxic to dogs and cats, and so are stop-smoking products like nicotine gum. Signs of nicotine poisoning come on quickly and include elevated heart and respiratory rates, neurological symptoms, loss of bladder or bowel control, tremors, seizures, paralysis and death.

Never leave chocolate unattended. Even small amounts can cause problems, particularly dark chocolate.

“Sugarless” artificially-sweetened gum and mints contain xylitol, a sugar substitute highly toxic to dogs. Even a small amount of xylitol can result in a dangerous blood sugar crash in canines, and larger amounts can lead to liver failure. Symptoms of xylitol poisoning include vomiting, weakness, collapse, shaking and seizures. In addition to gum, mints and other sugarless candy, xylitol is commonly found in chewable vitamins, certain prescription drugs, dental hygiene products, nicotine gum and baked goods.

Some human foods can be harmful to animals as well. Onions, onion powder, garlic, mushrooms, corn cobs, grapes and raisins, in even small quantities, can be fatal. Cooked bones are very dangerous. They can lodge in a dog’s passageways or puncture its intestines.

Baby diapers and kitty litter, if ingested, can cause death.

Many common household items can be lethal to animals. Mothballs, potpourri oils, **aroma diffusers**, coffee grounds, homemade play dough, fabric softener sheets, dishwashing detergent, batteries, cigarettes, alcoholic drinks and hand and foot warmers are all highly toxic, even in small quantities.

Automotive products such as gasoline, oil and especially antifreeze should be stored in areas that are inaccessible to your pets. As little as 1 teaspoon of antifreeze can be deadly to a cat weighing seven pounds; less than 1 tablespoon can be lethal to a dog weighing 20 pounds.

Before buying a flea product for use on your companion animal, ask your veterinarian for a recommendation. Read all of the information on the label before using a product on your pet or in your home. Always follow directions. If a product is for use only on dogs, it should never be used on cats; if a product is for use only on cats, it should never be used on dogs.

Make sure your companion animals do not enter areas in which foggers or house sprays have been used for the period of time indicated on the label.

Make sure your pets do not go on lawns or in gardens treated with fertilizers, herbicides, or insecticides until they have dried completely. Always store such products in areas that are inaccessible to your companion animals.

If you are uncertain about the usage of any product, ask the manufacturer and/or your veterinarian for instructions.

### **Be prepared**

Post your veterinarian's telephone number in a convenient location. You should also post the address and number of a nearby emergency clinic, along with the number of the National Animal Poison Control Center (NAPCC), which is (888) 426-4435.

There is a dedicated resource for animal poison emergencies at the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center. This is the only dedicated animal poison control hotline in the world manned by veterinarians, not telephone operators. The number is staffed **24/7** at **(888) 4ANI-HELP** or **(888) 426-4435**. The fee is \$65 per case, including as many follow-up calls as necessary, and it could save your pet's life.