

Paints and solvents

Paint thinners, mineral spirits, and other solvents are dangerous and can cause severe irritation or chemical burns if swallowed or contacting your pet's skin.

While most latex house paints typically cause minor stomach upset, some artist's or other specialty paints may contain heavy metals or other substances that could be harmful if inhaled or swallowed.

Plants—inside or around the house

Many household and yard plants can sicken your pet if eaten. These are some of the most common plants and plant material that should be kept away from pets:

- Certain lilies (*Lilium* and *Hermerocallis* species) are highly toxic to cats, resulting in kidney failure—even in only small amounts.
- Lily of the valley, oleander, yew, foxglove, and kalanchoe may cause heart problems.
- Sago palms (*Cycas* species) can cause severe intestinal problems, seizures, and liver damage, especially if the nut or seed portion of the plant is swallowed.
- Azaleas, rhododendrons, and tulip/narcissus bulbs can cause intestinal upset, weakness, depression, heart problems, coma, and death.
- Castor bean can cause severe intestinal problems, seizures, coma, and death. Other plants that can cause intestinal upset include cyclamen, amaryllis, chrysanthemums, pothos, English ivy, philodendron, corn plant, mother-in-law's tongue, hibiscus, hydrangea, peace lily, and schefflera.
- Rhubarb leaves and shamrock contain substances that can produce kidney failure.
- Some fungi (such as certain varieties of mushrooms) can cause liver, kidney, intestinal or nervous system damage, and even death.
- Cocoa shell mulch, which dogs love to eat, may cause signs similar to chocolate poisoning, including vomiting, diarrhea, tremors, and seizures.

A few other potentially harmful plants include the yesterday-today-and-tomorrow plant (*Brunfelsia* species), autumn crocus (*Colchicum* species), and glory lily (*Gloriosa* species).

HOLIDAY HAZARDS

Holidays and visitors can pose a special challenge to your pets. Discourage well-meaning guests from spoiling pets with extra treats and scraps from the dinner table. Besides the risk of your pet being fed something toxic, fatty, rich, or spicy foods can be too much for your pet's system to handle, causing vomiting, diarrhea, and pancreatitis. Cooked chicken, turkey, and other soft bones can splinter and damage your pet's mouth or digestive system.

Although trick or treating is fun for children, Halloween treats like chocolate or xylitol-sweetened candy are toxic to pets. Certain holiday decorations also can harm pets if swallowed. In particular, string-like items such as ribbons or tinsel can become trapped in your pet's intestines, requiring surgical removal. So make sure nothing is left on the floor or on tables within reach.

Various holiday plants like lilies, poinsettias, holly, and mistletoe can cause an upset stomach or worse when eaten. Christmas tree water treated with preservatives (including fertilizers) also can cause an upset stomach. Further, water that is allowed to sit for long periods in tree stands can contain bacteria that could cause nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.

SPECIAL CAUTION TO BIRD OWNERS

Most hazards listed here apply to your pet bird, particularly if the bird is allowed outside of the cage. In addition, birds are especially sensitive to inhaled particles and fumes from aerosol products, overheated nonstick pots and pans containing polytetrafluoroethylene (Teflon), essential oils, tobacco products, certain glues, paints, and air fresheners. To be safe, keep your bird away from areas where such products are being used. This includes kitchens, where exposure to cooking fumes, smoke, and odors may cause severe illness or even death.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR PET IS POISONED

Don't wait! Time is critical for successfully treating poisoning. Pick up the phone and **call your veterinarian, or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (1-888-426-4435) or Pet Poison Helpline (1-855-764-7661)**. A consultation fee may apply. Be prepared to provide your pet's breed, age, weight, and any signs of illness. Keep the product container or plant sample with you to help identify the source of poisoning so appropriate treatment recommendations can be made.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO KEEP YOUR PET HAPPY AND HEALTHY AS LONG AS POSSIBLE, VISIT:

American Veterinary Medical Association
avma.org/PetOwners



avma.org

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HOUSEHOLD HAZARDS

*Brought to you by your veterinarian
and the American Veterinary Medical Association*



Every home contains a variety of everyday items and substances that can be dangerous or even fatal to pets. You can protect your pet by being aware of the most common health hazards and taking steps to prevent accidents.

HAZARDS IN THE KITCHEN

Foods

Many foods are perfectly safe for people, but could be harmful or even deadly to pets, especially if eaten in large amounts. To be safe, keep the following food items off your pet's menu (and reach):

- Alcohol
- Avocado
- Chives
- Chocolate
- Coconut water
- Coffee/coffee grounds
- Fatty foods
- Fruit pits
- Garlic
- Grapes/raisins
- Macadamia nuts
- Onions
- Salt/salty snacks
- Tea
- Yeast dough
- Any products containing xylitol (an artificial sweetener)

Garbage

Always keep garbage out of a pet's reach. It may contain items that can lead to intestinal problems (including blockage, vomiting, and diarrhea) or pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas), a painful and potentially life-threatening illness.

Cleaning products

Many household cleaners can be used safely around pets. The key to safe use lies in reading and following product directions for use and storage. For instance, if the label says, "Keep pets and children away from area until dry," follow those directions to prevent possible health risks.

Products containing bleach can safely disinfect many household surfaces when used properly. But if pets get hold of them, they can cause stomach upset, drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, severe burns if swallowed, and respiratory tract irritation if inhaled in a high enough concentration. In addition, concentrated solutions can produce serious chemical burns if they come in contact with pets' skin. Some

other detergents or disinfectants can produce a similar reaction, and cats can be particularly sensitive to certain ingredients such as phenols.

As a general rule, store all cleaning products in a secure cabinet out of the reach of pets, and keep them in their original packaging, or in a clearly labeled and tightly sealed container.

Insect and rodent control products

As with household cleaners, read and follow label instructions before using any type of insect control or prevention product in your pet's environment. For example, flea and tick products made specifically for dogs (such as those containing permethrin) should never be used on cats or other species because they may cause serious or even life-threatening problems. **Always ask your veterinarian** about the safe use of these products for your pet.

If a pet eats rat or mouse poison—or an animal that has eaten this poison—potentially serious or even life-threatening illness can result. When using any such poisons, it's important to place them in areas **completely inaccessible to pets**. Some rodent poisons such as bromethalin have no known antidote, and can pose significant health risks to animals and people.

HAZARDS IN THE BATHROOM

Medications

Medications used to treat human conditions are among the top causes of reported pet poisonings in the U.S. Never give your pet any medication, including non-prescription medicines and dietary supplements, unless directed by your veterinarian.

Here are just some examples of medicines/supplements that can harm pets:

- Acetaminophen
- Anti-anxiety medications
- Antidepressants
- Antihistamines
- Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder medications
- Blood pressure medications
- Certain non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin, ibuprofen, or naproxen
- Cholesterol-lowering drugs
- Cold medicines
- Iron supplements
- Skin products containing fluorouracil
- Sleep aids
- Thyroid hormones
- Vitamins
- Weight-loss supplements

To keep your pet safe, keep all medications sealed and stored securely, out of reach.

Fluorouracil, a chemotherapy drug that also is found in certain medicated skin creams and solutions, is a leading cause of poisoning deaths in dogs. Dogs may be exposed to the drug by chewing on the container or licking skin where the drug has been applied.

To keep your pet safe, it's best to keep all medications—including pet medications—sealed and stored securely, out of your pet's reach. Pets also need to be prevented from licking people's skin after medicated creams or solutions have been applied.

Special note: Narcotics—like morphine, oxycontin, hydrocodone, fentanyl, etc.—can cause severe illness or death in pets. This is the case regardless whether they are prescribed legally or obtained illegally. Unless prescribed specifically for your pet by your veterinarian, **never** give your pet narcotics.

Soaps and other items

Bath and hand soaps, toothpaste, and sunscreen products should be kept away from pets. They can cause stomach upset, vomiting, or diarrhea if swallowed. Keep toilet lids closed to prevent pets from drinking toilet water treated with toilet bowl cleaning agents, which could irritate their digestive tract.

OTHER HAZARDS IN THE HOME

Many other items in the home can be harmful to pets and need to be kept out of reach.

- **Liquid potpourri products** contain ingredients that can cause mouth sores and other problems if swallowed.
- **Essential oils**—particularly highly concentrated products—also can harm pets. Consult your veterinarian before giving your pet any product containing essential oil.
- **Mothballs** can be toxic, causing serious illness or death if inhaled or swallowed. This is especially true for mothballs that contain naphthalene.
- **Nicotine products** (everything from cigarettes to vape pens to nicotine gums and patches) can cause illness and death in pets.
- **Small items** that fall on the floor can easily be swallowed by a curious pet. These include coins, buttons, batteries, small children's toys, medicine bottles, jewelry, nails, and screws.



The result may be damage to your pet's digestive tract, and surgery may be needed to remove the object.

- **Plugged-in electrical cords** can cause burns or electrocution when pets chew on them. Protect your pets by using cord covers and blocking access to cords and wires.

Marijuana and CBD

Keep all marijuana and cannabidiol (CBD) products, especially edibles, out of the reach of pets. When pets eat or inhale tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the main component of marijuana that produces a high in people, it can cause stumbling, lethargy or agitation, tremors/shaking, urine dribbling, and other problems. Signs of a CBD overdose in pets include vomiting and diarrhea.

HAZARDS IN THE GARAGE AND YARD

Antifreeze and other chemicals

Antifreeze and coolants that contain ethylene glycol, even in small quantities, can be fatal to pets when swallowed. While antifreeze products containing propylene glycol are less toxic, they also can be dangerous. Other substances routinely stored in the garage also pose threats to your pet's health. These include things like fertilizers, pest or weed killers, ice-melting products, and gasoline.

When chemical treatments are applied to grassy areas, be sure to keep your pet off the lawn for the manufacturer's recommended time. If pets happen to get these chemicals on their legs or body, they may lick them off, causing stomach upset or more serious problems.