

Pet Safety:
Startling Pet Toxins

Did you know that some of your favorite foods are dangerous to pets?

Treats such as raisins, grapes and avocados can be deadly. When educating the public about potentially toxic substances, most of the focus has been on unintentional and preventable poisonings of children. However, the Animal Poison Control Center estimates that they respond to accidental *pet* poisoning cases every year. The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) encourages pet owners to learn what foods, plants and other substances are harmful to pets.

"It is especially important to realize that what humans eat and enjoy may be toxic to pets," said Dr. Jack Walther, president of the AVMA. "Grapes, chocolate, raisins, avocados and other seemingly harmless foods can be harmful or even fatal. Pet owners should also talk to their veterinarian about environmental hazards in their area and how to properly use flea control products."

Clinical signs of poisoning in animals may vary greatly from extreme excitement to severe depression. If you suspect that a pet has been accidently poisoned, phone your veterinarian and ask for emergency treatment advice. Try to determine what the poison is and how much the pet ingested.

Keep meds out of reach

Ensure that your pets don't have access to any medications. Some human medications are poisonous to pets. This includes common, over-the-counter and prescription medicine, including aspirin, vitamins and sleeping pills.

According to the ASPCA, just one regular-strength 200 mg ibuprofen (Motrin®) pill can trigger stomach ulcers in a 10-pound dog. Other commonly used human medications, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and other pain relievers, antidepressants and diet pills can be lethal. Ensure that your home is *'pet proof,'* with all medicines stored safely out of a pet's reach and sight.

Common seasonal pet poisons include plants such as lilies, Rhododendrons, nightshade and Japanese yews; chemicals such as fertilizer, rat poisons, swimming pool treatment supplies, pest control products and antifreeze; and animals such as toads or spiders. An extensive list of poisons can be found at www.avma.org.

When it comes to accidental pet poisonings, prevention is paramount. In addition to the obvious toxic materials, pet owners need to know which outwardly innocent substances may be dangerous to their pets as well.

PSI Pet Sitters international MEMBER

©2011-2015 Pet Sitters International, Inc.