

Poisoning in Dogs Knowing the Risks and Steps in an Emergency

In many cases, poisoning can be life threatening, and it is important to know your vet's contact information as well as that of an emergency veterinarian, in case of possible poisoning.

You should contact your veterinarian immediately.

Dogs are members of our family, and we take great care to keep them healthy and happy. But accidents do happen, and knowing what to do when an accident happens is critical. When it comes to possible poisonings, knowing what your pup had access to, or knowing the signs and symptoms, will help in the initial moments to help save your pet. It is just as important to know what potential dangers are in your home, ones you may not have even realized your dog could gain access to.

If you suspect your dog has been poison, contact your vet immediately. If your vet is not available, contact an emergency vet, as this IS an emergency situation.

Below are common types of poisoning, symptoms, and suggestions for immediate action, while contacting your vet and arranging for immediate health care attention.



This article contains information regarding the following poisons:

Acid
Adhesive
Alcohol
Cleaners/Solvents
Rat/Rodent Poisoning
Anti-Depressant
Anti-Freeze

Arsenic
Aspirin
Barbiturate
Carbon Monoxide
Chlorinated Hydrocarbon
Chocolate
Other Common Poisons

• Dog Acid Poisoning and Burns

How: Dogs can get acid poisoning or burns from regular items in any household, including batteries and household cleaners. Acid poisoning can occur either by ingestion or through absorption through the skin.

Ingested: If ingested, signs include abdominal pain, blood-tinged vomit, mouth burns and shock. If ingestion is suspected, **do not induce vomiting**; the acid will re-burn the esophagus and mouth upon exit. Try to get your dog to drink milk, a baking soda solution or milk of magnesia (1 teaspoon per 5 pounds of body weight).

Skin Absorption: Acid burns on the skin will appear raw and irritated. Suspected acid burns should be flushed with a solution of baking soda and water.

In either case, take your dog to your veterinarian immediately.

• Dog Adhesive Poisoning

How: exposure to glue and paste, or other adhesive substances. Exposure can occur from ingestion, inhaling, or physical contact.

Signs & Symptoms: lip smacking, drooling and abdominal pain.

What to do: If you suspect an adhesive has been ingested, **do not induce vomiting**; instead, attempt to give your dog milk.

Contact your veterinarian immediately.

- **Dog Alcohol Poisoning**

How: Curious dogs are drawn to items that you use and touch, and follow your scent to reach them. Alcohol poisoning can occur from many items, including alcoholic drinks, perfumes, aftershaves and rubbing alcohol.

Signs & Symptoms: vomiting, collapse, dehydration, coma and death.

What to do: If the dog is unconscious, take it to a veterinarian immediately. If the dog is conscious, induce vomiting by giving 1 teaspoon syrup of ipecac or 1 tablespoon of a 1:1 mixture of hydrogen peroxide and water. Follow with a crushed tablet of activated charcoal to absorb the remaining toxins and call your veterinarian.

Alcohol is particularly poisonous to dogs, so it is important not only to be careful what is kept around, but also to educate those in your household and visiting the dangers involved in providing, offering or exposing dogs to alcohol.

Contact your veterinarian immediately.

- **Dog Alkaline Poisoning – Cleaners/Solvents**

How: alkaline burns and poisoning are typically caused by drain cleaners and solvents.

Signs & Symptoms: severe burning of the skin or mouth. Signs of alkaline poisoning include abdominal pain, blood tinged vomiting and mouth burns.

What to do: The skin should be flushed with plenty of water, followed by a solution of vinegar and water to neutralize the alkali. If you suspect alkaline poisoning **do not induce vomiting**; the chemicals will re-burn the dog's esophagus and mouth when it comes back up. Instead, give the dog evaporated milk with 50% lemon juice or vinegar to neutralize the alkali.

See your veterinarian for further treatment.

- **Dog Alphachoralose Poisoning – Rat/Rodent Poisoning**

How: The most common household source of alphachoralose poisoning is ingesting a rodent contaminated with poison.

Signs & Symptoms: chills, lethargy and depression. Severe cases can result in kidney damage, convulsions and coma.

What to do: If you suspect that your dog has been poisoned with this substance, wrap it in a blanket and call your veterinarian immediately.

Contact your veterinarian immediately.

- **Dog Anti-Depressant Poisoning**

How: dog's noses and tongues can reach into the crevices of cabinets and odds are, will find anything that is dropped or fallen. Dogs can and often will get into prescription medications, including anti-depressants such as valium and diazepam.

Signs & Symptoms: depression, loss of consciousness and coma.

What to do: If the dog is conscious, induce vomiting by giving 1 teaspoon syrup of ipecac or 1 tablespoon of a 1:1 mixture of hydrogen peroxide and water, and consult your veterinarian. **If the dog is unconscious, take it to the veterinarian immediately.**

Contact your veterinarian immediately.

- **Dog Anti-Freeze Poisoning**

How: Dogs, and other pets, love the taste of anti-freeze because of the sweet taste. The chemical forms crystal deposits on the brain and kidneys. Even a small amount can cause very serious kidney damage and failure.

Signs & Symptoms: depression, convulsions and coma.

What to do: Once a dog has ingested anti-freeze **there is only a couple of hours to get help** from your veterinarian before the damage is irreversible. If left untreated, the dog will die. If there is any suspicion that your dog has ingested anti-freeze, contact your vet immediately.

Always store antifreeze in a place that is inaccessible to pets.

Contact your veterinarian immediately.

- **Dog Arsenic Poisoning**

How: The most common household causes of arsenic poisoning are paint, herbicides, insecticides and rat poisons.

Signs & Symptoms: Signs of arsenic poisoning include restlessness, abdominal pain, vomiting and bloody diarrhea.

What to do: If you suspect arsenic poisoning, induce vomiting by giving 1 teaspoon syrup of ipecac or 1 tablespoon of a 1:1 mixture of hydrogen peroxide and water. Follow with milk to coat the dog's stomach.

Call your veterinarian immediately, an antidote is available.

- **Aspirin Poisoning**

How: Aspirin should never be administered to your dog unless directed by your veterinarian. Although it is a common household painkiller that is safe for dogs in the proper doses, overdosing can cause serious side effects.

Signs & Symptoms: Symptoms of aspirin poisoning include lack of coordination, vomiting that may be blood tinged, hypersensitivity and loss of appetite.

What to do: If you suspect aspirin poisoning, induce vomiting by giving 1 teaspoon syrup of ipecac or 1 tablespoon of a 1:1 mixture of hydrogen peroxide and water. Follow with milk and a crushed tablet of activated charcoal, and call your veterinarian.

Contact your veterinarian immediately.

- **Dog Barbiturate Poisoning**

How: Dogs can gain access to prescriptions containing barbiturates, specifically ones used for seizure disorders, migraines, and even some for gastrointestinal disorders, among others.

Signs & Symptoms: depression, sleepiness and loss of consciousness, followed by coma.

What to do: If your dog is conscious, induce vomiting by giving 1 teaspoon of syrup of ipecac or 1 tablespoon of a 1:1 mixture of hydrogen peroxide and water. Do all you can to keep your dog moving and call your veterinarian immediately.

Contact your veterinarian immediately.

- **Carbon Monoxide**

How: Dogs that are accidentally locked in a garage where a car or small engine is running can easily succumb to carbon monoxide fumes. Poisoning occurs rapidly.

Signs & Symptoms: Symptoms include bright red gums and distressed breathing.

What to do: The dog should be placed in fresh air immediately and encouraged to move in order to increase blood circulation. If a dog becomes unconscious, it should be given [artificial respiration](#). Pull the dog's tongue forward so it does not block the throat. Pull the neck and head forward and close the dog's mouth. Apply a dog muzzle. (Wrap a strip of material around the nose, tie under the chin and tie ends behind the dog's head.) Inhale and put your mouth over the dog's nose forming an airtight seal. Exhale. Remove your mouth and allow the dog's chest to deflate. Repeat the process 10 to 15 times per minute.

**Be aware that a dog regaining consciousness may be aggressive and bite.
When the dog regains consciousness.**

Contact your veterinarian immediately.

- **Dog Chlorinated Hydrocarbon Poisoning**

How: Poisoning with this substance can occur either through absorption through the skin or through ingestion. Hydro-carbons are petroleum or oil-based compounds used for a variety of products.

Signs & Symptoms: muscle twitching and hypersensitivity to touch. Handling will often trigger epileptic-like convulsions.

What to do: There is no specific antidote, other than to try to do what is possible to reduce the amount of poison absorbed into the dog's system.

If the dog is not convulsing and the poisoning occurred through the skin, wash the dog with soap and water. If poisoned through ingestion, induce vomiting by giving 1 teaspoon syrup of ipecac or 1 tablespoon of a 1:1 mixture of hydrogen peroxide and water. Do not give milk, fats or oils. Do not pet the dog. Place it in a dog crate or box to reduce handling and take to the veterinarian immediately.

Contact your veterinarian immediately.

- **Chocolate (Theobromine) Poisoning in Dogs - Dogs and Chocolate, a Toxic Combination**

How: Chocolate or cocoa poisoning is a common problem in dogs, especially around holidays where there may be more opportunities for chocolate to be in the house. Many dogs die every year from ingesting chocolate because of a chemical it contains, called theobromine.

Signs & Symptoms: Aside from the tell tale signs of torn wrappers, missing chocolates, or guilty chocolate covered faces, Symptoms of chocolate poisoning include vomiting, diarrhea, hyperactivity, abnormal gait and increased urination. More severe cases exhibit muscle tremors, convulsions and coma.

What to do: If you suspect that your dog may have chocolate poisoning, transport it to the veterinarian immediately. As an emergency procedure, give your dog several tablets of activated charcoal (which should be contained in your [dog's first aid kit](#)). Even if your dog is acting normal, but you know it has eaten a large amount of chocolate, you should still see your vet as soon as possible. Treatment for theobromine poisoning may need to last for several days since this chemical is eliminated from the body very slowly.

Contact your veterinarian for treatment recommendations.

Additional Common Items that dogs should avoid. If dogs have access to or you suspect they've eaten any of these, contact your veterinarian immediately for recommendations.

- Grapes and Raisins
- Macadamia Nuts
- Xylitol – used in throat lozenges, vitamins, gum, baking products
- Onions

Contact your veterinarian for treatment recommendations.

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