

Toxins

XYLITOL

What is it and why is it SO toxic.

Xylitol is the “latest” diet product to enter the mass market of consumer food products. Xylitol is a sugar alcohol - an artificial sweetener from birch, raspberries, plums and corn. This product is found in many human “sugar free” products as gum, candy and other sweets. In humans, high doses may have laxative effect, but in dogs, ingestion could be fatal. Xylitol can be found in toothpastes, sugar free gums, low-carb baked goods and deserts. It is also becoming more common in cooking products so check the packaging before you let your dog “lick out the bowl.” Check out these websites for more information on the toxicity of Xylitol:

http://vetmedicine.about.com/od/toxicology/qt/xylitol_tox.htm

http://www2.aspc.org/site/DocServer/vetm0207f_095-100_.pdf?docID=10462

http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2007-03-18-xylitol-sweetner_N.htm

material provided by Wendee Hall.

Fall presents more hazards for our pets than we think!

Prevention is the Key with Toxins

Toxins are more common than we think

While prevention is the key to keeping your pet safe it is not always possible, so knowing the symptoms of possible poisoning may be critical in saving your pet’s life. No one knows your pet better than you do so you notice sooner than anyone if they are not feeling well. The obvious signs of poisoning are:

- Irritation to skin or mouth
- Drooling
- Diarrhea
- Seizures
- Unconsciousness
- Vomiting
- Excitement/nervousness/trembling
- Excessive thirst
- Muscle spasms

Our pets are curious creatures, especially young ones, so knowing the most common toxins is imperative. Here is a list of some of the most common ones:

- Toxic foods include chocolate, avocado, onions and garlic, raisins and grapes, alcoholic drinks, caffeinated beverages, macadamia nuts, and *especially chewing gum or cooking products with xylitol.*
- The fall brings mushrooms that can be toxic and garden mulch from leaves and grass clippings.
- In the fall we also treat our yards with fertilizer, herbicides or insecticides. If that’s the case keep your pet off lawns and rinse off their feet off if they come in contact with treated lawns or gardens.

Also watch for slug bait, dogs love it and it is VERY toxic. Use small amounts of beer to kill slugs. It works and small amounts won’t hurt your dog.

•We all know the dangers presented by antifreeze/coolant. Our cats and dogs can’t seem to resist the “sweet” taste of antifreeze so please watch out for coolant leaks and wipe up any amount you see on your driveway or on the street. Even small amounts of antifreeze/coolant can be toxic to your pet causing kidney failure. If your pet ingests any call or see your veterinarian **immediately**.

If your veterinarian is closed and you suspect your pet has been poisoned you can call the National Animal Poison Control line at 1-888-426-4435 7 days a weeks 24 hours a day. This is a fee for service line so have your credit card handy.

You can also call your local emergency veterinarian or the Dove Lewis Emergency Animal Hospital at 503-228-7281. They are experts at critical care and can probably provide life savings tips over the phone before you get to your vet.

If you have other questions about this fact sheet please ask one of our veterinarians or ask us a question online at askavet@comcat.net and one of our veterinarians at Willamette Valley Animal Hospital will be more than happy to respond.

If you want a “fact sheet” on a specific topic ask any of our staff for help.