

## Top Pet Toxins

Both known and unknown toxins can be found hiding in our houses and yards. In 2011, the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (APCC) in Urbana, IL, fielded more than 165,900 phone calls about pets exposed to poisonous substances. If you have any reason to suspect your pet has ingested something toxic, please contact your veterinarian or the Animal Poison Control Center's 24-hour hotline at (888) 426-4435.

### 1. Prescription Human Medications and Human Vitamins (especially Iron)

Almost 25,000 calls last year were about human prescription medications. Pets, especially dogs, are notorious for ingesting any dropped pill. Cardiac and ADHD medications make up a large percentage of these calls. Always make sure to take these medications in a safe place away from your pets.

### 2. Insecticides

Insecticides were the subject of 11% of calls to the ASPCA in 2011. These include products used on the lawn, in the house and on the pet. The most important thing to do is read the label before you use any insecticide, and never use a product labeled for dogs on cats.

### 3. Over-the-Counter Human Medications

Over-the-counter medications such as ibuprofen and acetaminophen can kill your pet. Never give any medication to your pet without consulting with your veterinarian first.

### 4. People Food

Chocolate is still the number 1 people food that pets ingest (we received over 7,600 calls last year). Too much chocolate can cause vomiting, diarrhea, high heart rate and seizures. Dark Chocolate can cause death. The second most common food is xylitol (the sugar substitute). Xylitol can cause seizures and liver failure in dogs. XYLITOL is found in almost all SUGERLESS GUM and many other sugarless products such as Diet soda, Breath Mints and sugar free sweeteners. Other toxic foods are grapes, raisins, onions, garlic, avocado, fat trimmings, coffee, tea or any other items with caffeine, uncooked meat. Generally it is best to keep you dog on a well balanced dog food diet fed 2 times per day. Do not change up your dogs food, dogs can get digestive problems if you frequently change their diet. If you must feed people food, boiled skinless and boneless chicken is a good choice or Fully cooked beef can be given on occasion.

### 5. Household Products

It is amazing what animals can find to chew up around the house from fire logs to paint. Some household items may just cause stomach upset, while others can be deadly. Keep all cleaning products and other household products out of reach of pets.

### 6. Veterinary Medications

Chewable medications make it easy to give your dog or cat a pill. However, this tasty pill can also mean that the pet, if given access, will ingest all the pills in the bottle. Always make sure to keep pet medications out of reach. Contact your veterinarian if your pet ingests more than its proper dose of medication or ingests another pet's medication.

### 7. Rodenticides

When putting out baits to kill mice and rats, never underestimate the resourcefulness of your pet. Most bait is grain based and is attractive to dogs. Depending on the type of rodenticide, ingestion can cause internal bleeding, kidney failure or seizures.

### 8. Plants

About 4% of our phone calls are pet parents calling about their animals eating plants. This is one category that cats lead dogs in the number of exposures. Lilies can cause kidney failure and death in cats. Please see our list of [toxic/non-toxic plants](#) for more information. <http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/poison-control/plants/>

### 9. Lawn and Garden Products

Fertilizers, which can be made of dried blood, poultry manure and bone meal, are very attractive to pets, so it is not surprising that we get many calls (almost 3,900 in 2011) on lawn and garden items.

### 10. Automotive Products

With more people keeping their animals inside (especially cats), the number of animals exposed to automotive products (antifreeze, brake fluid, etc.) has dropped. This is great news since many of these products, if ingested, can be life-threatening to pets.

### 11. Pet Treats & Food **MADE IN CHINA!!!**

**Waggin' Train, Milo's Kitchen, Canyon Creek**, and other dog food and treats made in China: ESPECIALLY Chicken Jerky Treats!!!) This stuff is being investigated by FDA and still being sold in stores. Sale this week at CVS Pharmacy. Wagon Train ingredient list reads" chicken breast and glycerin. Testing has found glycols in it, aka antifreeze!!!. Major media mostly ignoring this epidemic of pet deaths. FDA now has 2,000+ complaints and there are Class Action Lawsuits in EIGHT states against Nestle' Purina and Del Monte. Pet Parents have incurred huge

vet bills because of feeding this product. Just Google "chicken jerky treats, dog deaths, FDA" that is where you will find the stories of grieving pet parents. Since the manufacturers refuse to accept responsibility for this disaster and do the right thing by removing from store shelves, we pet parents have had to take matters into our own hands and force a recall. Dennis Kucinich and Barbara Boxer want to know why FDA has done nothing to date but "investigate". SPREAD THE WORD! IF YOU HAVE OR KNOW OF ANYONE WHO HAS GIVEN THEIR DOG ANY BRAND OF JERKY OR YAM TREATS AND THE DOG BECAME LETHARGIC, NOT EATING, VOMITING, DIARRHEA GET DOG TO VET IMMEDIATELY! TELL VET THAT YOU GAVE THE JERKY TREAT. DOGS THAT EAT THESE TREATS DEVELOP KIDNEY FAILURE AND LIVER FAILURE. JOIN "ANIMAL PARENTS AGAINST PET TREATS MADE IN CHINA" ON Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Animal-Parents-Against-Pet-Treats-and-Food-Made-in-China/235390426550583?fref=ts> (SEE ARTICLE BELOW FROM SEPT 2012)

**UPDATE: 2013... THE FDA HAS FINALLY PULLED SOME OF THESE PRODUCTS FROM SHELVES AFTER HUNDREDS OF DOGS HAVE DIED. HOWEVER THERE ARE MANY STORES THAT STILL CARRY SOME ITEMS BE CAREFUL!**

### **China-made treats linked to deaths of hundreds of dogs**

News late last week that China-made dog treats have been linked to the deaths of 360 dogs - and 1 cat - and sickened another 2,000 over the past five years should prompt pet owners to do one thing: read the labels of the products they buy. The Food and Drug Administration in a [report](#) says the majority of complaints since 2007 involve imported chicken jerky (treats, tenders, and strips), but others include duck, sweet potato, and treats where chicken or duck jerky is wrapped around dried fruits, sweet potatoes, or yams.

The vast majority of dog treats and toys sold by the largest pet retailers are made in China. I flipped over a pumpkin-shaped rawhide in PetSmart yesterday and, yep, there's the sticker: Made in China.

The amount of China-made pet treats imported to North America has skyrocketed in the last decade from zero to 86 million pounds in 2011. News reports say it has to do with the fact the Chinese eat mainly the dark meat of chicken, leaving a glut of white meat that is made into pet treats.

The FDA, in a report, said it is investigating the reports of illnesses but no definitive cause has been determined.

"The ongoing global investigation is complex, multifaceted and includes a wide variety of experts at the FDA including toxicologists, epidemiologists, veterinary researchers, forensic chemists, microbiologists, field investigators and senior agency officials," the report says.

The FDA has also asked NASA to explore the possibility that the illnesses can be attributed to irradiation, a process used to eliminate pathogens to control spoilage. The space agency has conducted extensive studies on the effects of irradiated food.

This is not the first mass outbreak of illness among pets in North America linked to food handling in China. Remember [melamine contamination](#)? In 2007 revelations that hundreds of pet deaths were linked to a mild toxin, melamine, used in the processing of pet food in China, led to the largest recall of pet food in North America and a class action law suit.

There are alternatives. Many specialty pet stores offer American-made jerky and chew treats like deer antlers (naturally-shed we hope), bully sticks (made from bull penises) and sows ears, among them.

One source of mine, who is launching a U.S.-made pet treat line, told skeptical retailers at a convention recently that pet owners would happily pay a little more to ensure their pets are safe. After all, he asked them, "Do you want customers coming in and accusing you of selling products that killed their dog?"

Some pet owners are already asking that question - in court. Several lawsuits have been filed against the companies that sell the treats and the companies that make them, including Nestle Purina, which makes the popular **Waggin' Train** and **Canyon Ranch** jerky treat products, and Del Monte Corp., which makes popular **Milo's Kitchen Home-style Dog Treats**, reports NBC news.

In its report, the FDA says jerky treats are not necessary for a balanced diet and urges anyone feeding treats to limit their pet's intake and watch them closely for problem signs that may occur within hours to days of feeding the products. Signs include decreased appetite, decreased activity, vomiting, diarrhea, sometimes with blood; increased water consumption and/or increased urination.

An online petition is urging the FDA and manufacturers of chicken jerky treats imported from China to "immediately halt all sales until the treats can be safely sourced and proven to no longer be dangerous to our companions."