



## **Top 10 Human Medications Poisonous to Pets**

While pet parents may be well aware of poisons lurking around their home, many don't realize some of the biggest culprits are sitting right on their own nightstands. In 2007, the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center received 89,000 calls related to pets ingesting over-the-counter and prescription medications. To help prevent an accident, experts have created a list of the top 10 human medications that most often poison our furry friends.

Pets often snatch pill vials from counters and nightstands or gobble up meds accidentally dropped on the floor. Suggestions to avoid ingestion:

- ▶ Keep all medications in a cabinet; consider taking your pills into the bathroom so if one is dropped, you can shut the door and prevent your pet from accessing the room until the medication is found.
- ▶ Learn the name, dosage, strength and quantity of all your prescriptions should the unthinkable occur. For example, if several medications are kept in a bottle in your purse, be sure to know the amount. If your pet gets into the bottle, you know at worst how many tablets may have been ingested.

If you suspect your pet has ingested any of the items listed, please call your veterinarian or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center's 24 hour hotline: **888-426-4435**. It is best to keep all medications tucked away in bathroom cabinets – and far from curious dogs and cats.

### **1. NSAID's**

NSAID's (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) like ibuprofen or naproxen are the most common cause of pet poisoning in small animals and may cause serious problems even in minimal doses. Pet are extremely sensitive to their effects which include stomach and intestinal ulcers, and, with cats, kidney damage.

### **2. Antidepressants**

Antidepressants can cause vomiting and lethargy; certain types can lead to serotonin syndrome – a condition marked by agitation, elevated body temperature, heart rate, and blood pressure; disorientation, vocalization, tremors and seizures.

### **3. Acetaminophen**

Cats are especially sensitive to acetaminophen, which can damage red blood cells and interfere with their ability to transport oxygen. In dogs, it can cause liver damage; at higher doses, red blood cell damage.

### **4. Methylphenidate (for ADHD)**

Medications used to treat ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) in people act as stimulants in pets and can dangerously elevate heart rate, blood pressure and body temperature, as well as cause seizures.

### **5. Fluorouracil**

Fluorouracil – an anti-cancer drug – is used topically to treat minor skin cancers and solar keratitis in humans. It has proven to be rapidly fatal to dogs, causing severe vomiting, seizures, and cardiac arrest even in those who have only chewed on discarded cotton swabs used to apply the medication.

## **6. Isoniazid**

Often the first line of defense against tuberculosis, isoniazid is particularly toxic for dogs because they don't metabolize it as well as other species. It can cause rapid onset of severe seizures that may ultimately result in death.

## **7. Pseudoephedrine**

Pseudoephedrine is a popular decongestant in many cold and sinus products which acts like a stimulant if ingested by pets. In cats and dogs, it causes elevated heart rates, blood pressure and body temperature as well as seizures.

## **8. Anti-diabetics**

Many oral diabetic treatments, including glipizide and glyburide, can cause a major drop in blood sugar levels of affected pets. Clinical signs of ingestion include disorientation, lack of coordination, and seizures.

## **9. Vitamin D derivatives**

In pets, even small exposures to Vitamin D analogues like calcipotriene can cause life-threatening spikes in blood calcium levels. Clinical signs of exposure, including vomiting, loss of appetite, increased urination and thirst due to kidney failure, often don't occur for more than 24 hours after ingestion.

## **10. Baclofen**

Baclofen is a muscle relaxant that can impair the central nervous system of dogs and cats. Symptoms of ingestion include significant depression, disorientation, vocalization, seizures, and coma, which can lead to death.