



COMMON TOXINS



CHOCOLATE

TOXIN: Theobromine and caffeine.

The more cocoa that is in the chocolate, the more toxic it is. Cooking chocolate is seven times more toxic than milk chocolate.

SYMPTOMS: Seen within hours of ingestion – excitability, fast heart rate, tremoring, vomiting, diarrhoea, seizures and death.



ONION AND GARLIC

TOXIN: Disulfides

SYMPTOMS: May be seen within 24 hours to several days after ingestion and are due to damage to the red blood cells. Include pale gums, fast heart rate, rapid breathing, depression, weakness, red coloured urine, vomiting and diarrhoea.



MACADAMIA NUTS

TOXIN: Unknown toxic compound

SYMPTOMS: Seen within 12 hours of ingestion. Symptoms include weakness, depression, vomiting, tremoring, pain, inability to stand up and pale gums.



GRAPES, RAISINS, AND SULTANAS

TOXIN: Unknown toxic compound

SYMPTOMS: Depression, vomiting, disinterest in food, pain, diarrhoea, increased drinking and urination. Signs are due to kidney failure.



YEAST DOUGH

TOXIN: Ethanol – heat causes dough to expand in the stomach and the process produces alcohol.

SYMPTOMS: Abdominal pain, bloating of the abdomen, difficulty walking, depression, coma and possible death.



CHEWING GUM

TOXIN: Xylitol

SYMPTOMS: Seen within 30 minutes to 12 hours from ingestion. Symptoms include vomiting, depression, difficulty standing or walking, seizures and possible liver failure.



LILLIES

TOXIN: Unknown toxic compound in Lilium and Hemerocallis spp. The entire plant is toxic. Cats are especially susceptible to the toxicity.

SYMPTOMS: Vomiting (often contains pieces of lily) and signs associated with kidney failure including disinterest in food, depression, vomiting and no urination.



WILD MUSHROOM

TOXIN: Unknown toxic compound

SYMPTOMS: Depression, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, drooling, increased tear production, poor condition, inappropriate toileting and collapse. In severe cases, toxicity can lead to liver failure, kidney failure and death.



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PARACETAMOL

TOXIN: Paracetamol – cats are more sensitive to the medication.

SYMPTOMS: Blue-coloured gums, difficulty breathing and swelling of the face, depression, vomiting, weakness, coma and death.



RAT POISON

TOXIN: Various – most commonly brodifacoums, bromadiolones, diphacinones, diphenadiones, chlorphacinones, valones, pidones, warfarin and coumatrin.

SYMPTOMS: Seen 1 to 7 days after ingestion. Symptoms include lack of interest in food, coughing, depression, weakness, pale gums, black tarry stool, a bloody nose, vomiting blood, urinating blood, bleeding from the gums, breathing difficulty, lameness or excessive bleeding from wounds.



ASPIRIN

TOXIN: Aspirin

SYMPTOMS: Seen within 4 to 6 hours to several days after ingestion. Symptoms include depression, vomiting with or without blood, disinterest in food, rapid breathing, weakness, seizures, coma and death. Toxicity may lead to liver and kidney failure.



SNAIL PELLETS

TOXIN: Methaldehyde, methiocarb, or iron EDTA

SYMPTOMS: Depression, drooling, poor coordination, vomiting with or without blood, diarrhoea, passing black and blood stool. Toxicity may also cause liver failure. Even products claiming to be pet safe can be toxic.



MOTHBALLS

TOXIN: Naphthalene

SYMPTOMS: Vomiting, pale gums, fast heart rate, rapid breathing, depression, weakness, red coloured urine and seizures. Severe toxicity can cause liver and kidney failure.



COOLANT/ANTI-FREEZE

TOXIN: Ethylene Glycol

SYMPTOMS: Seen 30 minutes to 3 days after ingestion. Include nausea, vomiting, depression, poor coordination, seizures, diarrhoea, dehydration, coma and death. Symptoms are due to kidney failure.



CIGARETTES

TOXIN: Nicotine

SYMPTOMS: Usually within 15 – 45 minutes of ingestion. Symptoms include excitation, fast breathing, drooling, vomiting, diarrhoea, twitching, depression, fast heart rate, shallow breathing and can progress to collapse, coma and death.