Our world is fascinating for our pets. It’s full of lovely things to sniff, taste and explore. But there are lots of hidden dangers around our home and garden that we may not be aware of. So at PDSA, we have created this guide to advise you exactly what is poisonous, so you can protect your pets from sickness, injury or worse.
**Salt**
Salt, or sodium chloride, is extremely poisonous to pets. It’s common in human food and can also be found in dishwasher tablets and salts, bath salts, rock salt for de-icing roads and pavements, play dough – and of course, sea water.

**Vitamin D**
This vitamin is in supplement tablets, cod liver oil, human medicines and rat poisons. It’s also in skin creams and can be very poisonous as it affects a pet’s heart, liver and kidneys.

**Alcohol**
Anything containing ethanol is extremely toxic to dogs and cats, so keep them safely away. Ethanol is in alcohol, antiseptic preparations, mouthwashes, perfumes, aftershaves, colognes and glues. Methylated spirit is 95% ethanol. Drinks like gin and vodka can contain between 20 to 60%.

**Iron**
If your dog eats anything rich in iron, it can be fatal. Iron is in human supplements and iron tablets and used to treat anaemia. Iron is also usually in lawn moss killers and lawn ‘feed and weed’.

**Cleaning products**
In particular, products that contain bleach, ammonia, chlorine or formaldehyde. Even the vapours left behind after use can be harmful so keep pets out of the room for a few hours after cleaning.

**Rubbish Bins**
Rubbish bins can be tempting to scavenging paws but rotting foods can cause upset stomachs and bones create obstructions.

**Flea Treatment**
Flea treatment, if applied incorrectly. Always read the label and never exceed the recommended dose. Never apply a dog treatment to a cat.

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**HOUSEHOLD HAZARDS**

Watch out for the following foods that are harmful for pets:

- **Chocolate**
- **Avocados**
- **Caffeine and alcohol**
- **Walnuts and macadamias**
- **Onions, garlic and chives**
- **Grapes and raisins**
- **Cooked bones, fatty/salty foods**
- **Yeast dough**
- **Sorbitol and Xylitol (sweetener)**
- **Mushrooms**
- **Raw eggs and meat**
- **Human medication**

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GARDEN HAZARDS

It’s important to reduce the risk of injury by keeping your garden secure, to prevent your pets gaining access to roads and other hazards outside your garden. Check your garden regularly for broken glass, splintered wood and even grass seeds as these can become lodged in ears, eyes and toes.

But there are also less obvious hazards which may appeal to a curious pet and can cause issues if swallowed:

Pesticides
These chemicals, including slug pellets and rat poison, might be great for keeping unwanted reatures out of the garden but can be fatal to your furry friends.

Cold weather chemicals
Antifreeze can be deadly to both cats and dogs, so make sure any spills are cleaned immediately and it’s stored safely away from pets reach. Even rock salt, which is used to de-ice paths and driveways, can cause irritation to dog’s paws or if licked off the feet. Always wash paws after winter walks or use dog boots to protect their feet. Liquids such as white spirit and lighter fluids can also cause serious poisoning if swallowed, licked off fur, absorbed through the skin or inhaled.

Weedkillers
Even if a pet just brushes past a treated plant it can cause skin irritation and worse, if swallowed, so keep pets away from these areas.

Toads
Watch out for toads! When threatened, toads release an irritant poison that will hurt a curious pet’s tongue or skin. If this happens, rinse the affected area with plenty of water and phone the vet as soon as possible.

Plants
Here are a few of the more common plants that are poisonous to our pets:
• Lilies
• Azalea
• Daffodils
• Yew
• Cherry laurel
• Laburnum
• Lily of the valley
• Philodendron

Garden intruders
Most intruders come into gardens through gates or over fences, so keep garden gates closed. Urban foxes are especially successful at gaining entry, posing a threat to rabbits and guinea pigs. Keep small pets safely in their hutches and always supervise them when they’re out of their cages.

Bees, wasps and hornets can give pets a nasty sting. This can be very dangerous if they’re stung several times at once, or stung in the throat while eating one. Check gardens for nests and contact your local pest control.

Your local nursery should be able to help you steer clear of the poisonous plants.

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Foreign Bodies
A foreign body is anything in your pet’s body that shouldn’t naturally be there and has become stuck.

Most foreign bodies are swallowed and get trapped in the stomach or guts. Some foreign bodies become lodged under the skin, in the ear or eye, or are breathed in. Any object has the potential to become a foreign body but here are some of the common ones:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOREIGN BODY</th>
<th>MOST LIKELY TO GET STUCK IN...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grass Seed</td>
<td>Eye, ear and under the skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grit</td>
<td>Ear / eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stick</td>
<td>Throat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bones</td>
<td>Roof of mouth, throat and intestines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corn on the cob</td>
<td>Stomach / intestines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peach stone</td>
<td>Stomach / intestines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needle and thread</td>
<td>Throat / intestines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teat of dummy</td>
<td>Stomach / intestines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balls</td>
<td>Stomach / intestines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toys</td>
<td>Stomach / intestines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socks</td>
<td>Stomach / intestines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stones/pebbles</td>
<td>Stomach / intestines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coins</td>
<td>Stomach / intestines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish hooks</td>
<td>Tongue, throat and stomach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorns</td>
<td>Toes / under the skin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Out and about on walks

Adder bites
These usually occur in spring and summer. Adder bites are extremely dangerous, particularly if your pet is bitten in the face. They can cause severe swelling, bleeding, fever and shock. Contact your vet immediately if you suspect your pet has been bitten by an adder.

Blue green algae
This can cause rapid death if eaten. It’s found in fresh, brackish and marine water in the UK. It may form massive growths or blooms, especially in late spring, summer and early autumn. Look out for severe vomiting and diarrhoea, breathing difficulties, coma and fits. If you are worried that your pet may have ingested blue green algae, call your vet immediately.

If you’re worried your pet has picked up any of these hazards, please contact your vet for advice immediately.

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