

HIDDEN HAZARDS



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.



HOUSEHOLD HAZARDS

Keep cupboards closed from a sniffing nose

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

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.

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



OUT & ABOUT

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:

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

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

