



1333 Plaza Blvd, Suite E, Central Point, OR 97502 \* [www.mountainviewvet.net](http://www.mountainviewvet.net)

## COMMON POISONINGS

Robert J. Landon, DVM -- 4/14/10

With spring upon us and summer rapidly approaching, people and their pets become more active. This time of year often brings an increase in the number of cases of poisoning we see. So it is relevant to send out a reminder of some of the lesser known and more common toxins we see pets get into.

- **Raisins** and **grapes** in larger quantities (9 ounces to 2 pounds) have been shown to cause kidney failure in dogs. Not all dogs will be affected but we don't know yet which ones will be so aggressive therapy is warranted if you witness your dog eating a bag of grapes or raisins.
- **Xylitol** is an artificial sweetener in candies and gum. Dogs that ingest Xylitol have developed rapid drops in blood sugar and liver failure. Cases have occurred where the onset was delayed by up to a week. So avoid exposing your dog to sugar free sweets that contain xylitol.
- **Chocolate** contains a high amount of fat and toxic methylxanthines. The more cocoa bean used to make the chocolate, the more toxic agents it contains. Hyperactivity, restlessness, twitching, and even seizures may occur.
- **Slug and snail bait** contain metaldehyde compounds that cause neurologic symptoms 1 to 4 hours after exposure. Disorientation, tremors, and seizures can be seen that can result in death.
- **Mushrooms** are common in yards this time of year and some pets will find them interesting. There are many kinds of mushrooms and not all are poisonous, but some are deadly to your pet. Your best bet is to avoid possible contact and remove them from your yard as soon as you see them.
- **Antifreeze** commonly drips from our cars on hot days as the coolant in the radiator expands. Pools of antifreeze can be found in the garage or on the street. Antifreeze has a sweet smell and pets can be attracted to it. Antifreeze causes life-threatening kidney failure in dogs and cats, even in small amounts. Clean up and dispose of these spills as soon as they occur.

A majority of poisonings can be avoided if we are aware of the toxins and prevent access by our pets. If you witness your pet getting into a poisonous substance, stop the exposure and don't delay in contacting your veterinarian. Immediate treatment is usually cheaper than waiting to see what happens and almost always has a happier outcome.