



Spring Newsletter 2008

Congratulations to Joe O'Kane on his wedding this spring!

### Potential Household Poisons in Pets

Firstly, please make sure your pet **AVOIDS** the following food items:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Chocolate (baker's (dark), semi-sweet, milk chocolate)
- Onions or onion powder
- Coffee (grounds, beans, chocolate covered espresso beans)
- Mouldy or spoiled food
- Fatty foods
- Salt
- Yeast dough



Ingestion of any food that your pet is not used to can cause intestinal inflammation (vomiting and diarrhoea), but those mentioned above are specific toxins that may cause more life threatening conditions in your pet.

### Artificial sweetener found to be poisonous

Evidence is mounting that an artificial sweetener called XYLITOL is very dangerous to dogs. Xylitol is used in some sweets and chewing gum, rather than sugar. It is also sold as a sweetener for use in baking. It has been found that as little as one gram for a 10kg dog can cause dangerously low blood sugar levels. This can look the same as a diabetic coma. The substance also goes on to cause liver failure.

Our advice is not to give gum, sweets and sweetened bakery products to dogs. Better still, also avoid having products that contain Xylitol in your house.



## Plants to avoid:

- Lilies found in holiday flower arrangements can be deadly to your cat. Many types of lily, such as Tiger, Asian, Japanese Show, Easter, Stargazer, and the Casa Blanca, cause acute kidney failure in cats.
- Poinsettias generally have low toxicity. If ingested, poinsettias irritate the mouth and stomach, causing mild vomiting or nausea.
- Daffodils can be dangerous if eaten by dogs or cats or if they drink the water that the flowers are kept in.

## Your medications:

Please keep all your prescriptions and medicines away from your prying pets. Pain killers, cold medicines, anti-cancer drugs, antidepressants, vitamins, and diet pills can be lethal to your pet in very small dosages.

For example, one 200mg ibuprofen tablet can cause serious stomach ulcers in a 5kg dog. Less than one paracetamol tablet (325mg) can be extremely dangerous to a 4kg cat.

## More household hazards:

Antifreeze has a pleasant sweet taste but even in small amounts can be lethal. As little as one teaspoon of antifreeze can be deadly to a cat or dog. Please be very careful when changing your cars coolant and always thoroughly clean up any spills. Cats and dogs seem to like the taste of antifreeze!

Store your antifreeze in a tightly closed container well away from your pet. Low toxicity brand antifreeze contains propylene glycol and is recommended to use in pet households as this is less toxic. If you think your pet has ingested anti-freeze of any type please call your emergency vet immediately.

Ice melting products can be irritating to the skin and mouth. Signs of ingestion can include excessive drooling, depression and vomiting.

Your animal may become poisoned with little warning. You should keep our telephone number in a convenient location. If you suspect that your pet has ingested something poisonous, seek medical attention immediately and try to always bring in a sample of whatever your pet has eaten or a sample of their vomit if it looks suspicious for a poisoning. This may be the only clue we have to your pet's sudden illness.

