

Cat: Keeping Cats Safe from Poisons



Cats are naturally curious, but their curiosity can put them in danger, such as when they become tempted to taste plants or other household items that may be poisonous to them. Here are some recommendations to keep your kitties safe and prevent your greenery from getting chewed!

To Prevent Plant Eating

- Remove plants from areas the cat has access to.
- Provide your cat with a kitty herb garden to chew on—there are a number available in pet stores. Try oat grass, catnip, or alfalfa. Wheat grass is also safe for cats.
- Praise your kitty or give her treats when she chews on her kitty grass.
- Teach your cat not to chew on household plants by using an aversive spray. We recommend Bitter Apple, as it is safe for plants and animals (although it does not taste good to animals). Spray the product on all of the plant leaves. This way, if the cat tries to chew on the plant, it will have an unpleasant taste that it will associate with plant-eating. Hot chili sauce can be brushed on plant leaves for a similar effect.

Other Household Hazards

- Secure all cupboards, medicine chests, and closets to keep them off limits to kitties. Use child-proof latches when possible.
- Use natural, non-toxic cleaners when possible. Since cats are fastidious groomers, anything that makes contact with their skin may be ingested while they clean themselves.
- Cationic and anionic detergents (such as ammonia-based cleaners) and phenol disinfectants (such as PineSol) are especially dangerous to cats.
- Use safety or snap traps for pests instead of insecticides and rodenticides. Remember that your cat may ingest a poisoned mouse or bug and can then be poisoned himself.
- Never give your pet any medications that have not been prescribed by your veterinarian.
- Keep your cat indoors to reduce exposure to herbicides, anti-freeze, gasoline and other poisonous substances that they may ingest, either intentionally or by grooming themselves.
- Remember that some herbs and essential oils are poisonous to animals if ingested or applied topically. Always consult with your vet.
- Do not feed table scraps to your cat. Many human foods, such as chocolate and onions can be fatal to cats. Other foods can cause stomach distress.

Plants and poisons produce a variety of symptoms, but the following are cause for concern: Listlessness, muscle weakness, vomiting (especially if the vomit contains leaves or vegetable matter), abdominal pain, difficulty breathing, tremors, diarrhea, or convulsion.

Steps to Follow if You Suspect Your Pet Has Been Poisoned

1. Quickly determine the amount and type of plant or poison the animal has eaten.
2. Call your veterinarian immediately. If he or she is not available, contact the closest emergency veterinary clinic.
3. Carefully follow your veterinarian's instructions for immediate care.
4. Immediately take your pet, samples of any vomit or stool passed, and a large sample of the suspected plant to your veterinarian.

Cat: Keeping Cats Safe from Poisons *(continued)*

This list has been gathered from a variety of sources, but is far from complete. If your pet shows symptoms of poisoning, treat it as an emergency and get veterinary attention immediately.

Poisonous Plants

Amaryllis	Deadly	Lantana	Red Sage
Angels Trumpet	Nightshade	Larkspur	Rhododendron
Azalea	Delphinium	Laurel (English)	Rhubarb
Baneberry	Dieffenbachia	Ligustrum (privet)	Rosary Bean
Bittersweet	Dumb Cane	Lilly of the Valley	Squill
Black Locust	Elderberry	Marigold	String of Beads
Blue Cohosh	Euonymus	Marijuana	Sweet Pea
Boxwood	Foxglove	Mistletoe	Tallow Tree
Buttercup	Golden Chain	Monkshood	Toadstools
Caladium	Hemlock	Morning Glory	Tobacco
Carnation	Holly	Mountain Laurel	Tomato Leaves
Carolina Jasmine	Horse Chestnut	Narcissus	Toyon Leaves
Castor Bean	Hyacinth	Oleander	Umbrella Plant
Chinaberry Tree	Hydrangea	Periwinkle	Vinca
Chokecherry	Iris	Philodendron	Walnut (green)
Chrysanthemum	Ivy	Poinsettia	Wisteria
Cotoneaster	Jequirity Bean	Poison Ivy	Witch Hazel
Creeping Charlie	Jerusalem Cherry	Poison Oak	Woodrose
Crocus	Jimson Weed	Poison Sumac	Yaupon Tree
Daffodil	Jonquil	Pokeberry	Yew

Other Poisons

Animals

Bees
Bufo toads
Certain lizards and snakes
Fire ants
Rattlesnakes
Spiders
Wasps

Household

Substances

Ammonia products
Animal and plant poisons
Antifreeze

Antiperspirants
Bar soap
Bath oils
Brake fluid
Carburetor cleaners
Caulking compounds
Coal and wood tar derivatives
Detergents
Deodorants
Engine cleaners/frost removers
Eye makeup
Fabric softeners
Gasoline
Hair products
Lacquer thinners

Laxatives
Liniments
Lubricants
Moth Balls
Nail cosmetics
Oil paints
Ointments
Paint and varnish
Perfumes
Phenol disinfectants
Photographic chemicals
Pine oil disinfectants
Radiator cleaners
Shaving lotions
Suntan lotions
Tire repair products

Turpentine
Windshield washer fluid
Wood preservatives

Medicines

Acetaminophen
Athlete's foot remedies
Aspirin
Corn removers
Citrus oils and pennyroyal
Diet pills
Iodoform
Medicated products for dogs
Sleeping pills