

TOXICITY & POISONING IN CATS

Recognising Common Toxins & Acting Fast

Cats are highly sensitive to many substances commonly found in homes, gardens, and garages. Even small amounts of some toxins can cause severe illness or become life-threatening.

If you suspect poisoning, seek veterinary advice immediately.

**MANY COMMON
HOUSEHOLD
ITEMS CAN BE
TOXIC TO CATS.
EARLY TREATMENT
SAVES LIVES.**



? WHAT IS TOXICITY?

Toxicity occurs when a cat is exposed to a harmful substance through:

- Eating
- Licking
- Inhaling
- Skin contact
- Grooming contaminated fur

Some toxins can cause illness within minutes, while others may take hours or days.



💡 DID YOU KNOW?

- ✓ Cats lack some of the liver enzymes that help other species process certain chemicals.
- ✓ Many products safe for people or dogs can be toxic to cats.
- ✓ Toxins can affect multiple organs very quickly.



COMMON SOURCES OF TOXINS



Human Medications

- Paracetamol
- Ibuprofen
- Antidepressants
- ADHD medications



Household Products

- Cleaning chemicals
- Essential oils
- Antifreeze
- Paints & solvents



Toxic Foods

- Onions
- Garlic
- Chocolate
- Alcohol
- Xylitol



Garden & Plants

- Lilies (highly toxic)
- Sago palms
- Oleander
- Fertilisers & pesticides

1 RECOGNISE THE SIGNS

Common signs may include:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Drooling
- Loss of appetite
- Weakness
- Tremors
- Seizures
- Difficulty breathing
- Pale or blue gums
- Collapse



! *Some toxins initially cause only mild signs before becoming severe.*

2 WHICH CATS ARE MOST AT RISK?

- Curious kittens
- Outdoor cats
- Access to sheds/garages
- Use of essential oils
- Toxic plants nearby
- Medications present in the home



However, any cat can accidentally encounter toxins.

3 WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- ✓ Remove access to the toxin
- ✓ Keep your cat calm and secure
- ✓ Contact your veterinarian immediately
- ✓ Bring packaging or product information if possible
- ✓ Follow veterinary advice carefully

DO NOT:

- ✗ Induce vomiting unless instructed
- ✗ Give milk
- ✗ Administer home remedies
- ✗ Delay treatment



Early treatment can significantly improve outcomes.

4 HOW IS TOXICITY DIAGNOSED?

- Review exposure history
- Physical examination
- Blood tests
- Kidney & liver assessment
- Urine testing
- Blood clotting
- Cardiac assessment



Identifying the toxin helps guide treatment.

5 TREATMENT OPTIONS

Treatment depends on the toxin and timing of exposure.

- Decontamination
- Activated charcoal
- Intravenous fluids
- Anti-nausea medication
- Oxygen therapy
- Specific antidotes (when available)
- Seizure control
- Hospitalisation and monitoring



Some poisonings require intensive care.

6 PREVENTION TIPS

- Store medications securely
- Keep toxic plants out of reach
- Use pet-safe cleaning products
- Store chemicals safely
- Avoid essential oils around cats
- Supervise outdoor access
- Promptly clean spills



Prevention is always safer than treatment.

HIGHLY TOXIC PLANTS TO CATS



Lilies can cause kidney failure even in small amounts.

ADDITIONAL TIPS



Lilies are extremely dangerous



Human medications are common



Early treatment improves survival



"Natural" does not always mean safe

EVERY CAT COUNTS

If your cat has eaten, licked, inhaled, or been exposed to a potentially toxic substance, contact your veterinarian immediately.

Rapid treatment can prevent serious complications and save your cat's life.

