

Pets are curious and often can't resist smelling, tasting or swallowing foods, plants and other household items. Poison-proof your home with these simple tips:

- Learn about your plants since some common plants can be toxic to dogs and cats. Just one or two petals from lilies can be fatal.
- Keep home fragrance products, such as simmer pots of liquid potpourri, out of reach. If ingested, they can cause chemical burns.
- Avoid spraying aerosols around caged birds. They are sensitive to airborne products.
- Overheating a Teflon coated skillet gives off a toxin that affects lung tissues in birds that can result in the bird's death.
- Keep ashtrays and smoking cessation products such as nicotine chewing gum or patches out of reach. Cigarette butts contain enough nicotine to be poisonous to pets.
- Batteries can cause serious chemical burns. Dogs enjoy chewing on batteries and battery-containing devices such as remote controls and cell phones.
- Hang up your purse. Pets love to dig through purses and backpacks which often contain medications, cigarettes or sugar-free gum—all potential pet poisons.
- Keep these human foods away from your pets—raisins, grapes, macadamia nuts, onions, garlic, unbaked yeast bread dough, fatty foods and chocolate.
- Keep garbage cans behind closed doors. Trash and compost bins can contain pet toxins such as cigarette butts, coffee grounds, moldy foods and bones.
- Keep alcoholic beverages out of reach. Alcohol can cause low blood sugar in pets.
- Keep all medications (prescriptions and over-the-counter), inhalers and dietary supplements safely in secure cupboards.
- Never medicate your pets with human products without consulting your veterinarian. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and ibuprofen (Advil) are extremely poisonous to pets.
- Always check the container before giving medication to your pet to make sure it's the correct one.
- Store your medications separately from pet medications to avoid you or your pet getting the wrong medicine.
- Keep pets away from cleaning products.
- Close toilet lids to keep pets from drinking the water, especially if you use automatic chemical tank or bowl treatments.
- Keep rat and mouse poison far away from pets. Rodents can transfer the products to locations accessible by pets. Before using rodenticides, consult your veterinarian or Pet Poison Helpline to select one that is safe for your pet.
- Read insecticide labels carefully. Never use dog flea and tick products on your cat as they may cause tremors and seizures.
- Keep glues out of reach. Some glues expand once ingested and require surgical removal. One ounce of glue may expand to the size of a basketball!

- Ethylene glycol (antifreeze) products are extremely toxic and have a sweet taste that may be appealing to pets. Choose propylene glycol-based antifreeze as a safer alternative. If antifreeze is spilled, clean it up immediately or dilute it with several gallons of water.
- Keep all automotive products—windshield cleaner fluid or brake fluid—away from pets. They may contain methanol, a toxic alcohol similar to ethylene glycol antifreeze.
- Keep fertilizer bags sealed and out of reach. Dogs like the taste of some fertilizers such as bone meal or blood meal.
- Grub or snail killers, especially those that include metaldehyde, can be harmful to pets.
- Yard insecticides that contain organophosphates or carbamates can be very dangerous if ingested in high concentrations.
- Keep pets off lawns until commercially sprayed herbicides are dry.

If you think your pet may have ingested something harmful, take immediate action. Contact your veterinarian, Pet Poison Helpline or OSU's Veterinary Hospital that provides emergency services 24/7 at (405) 744-7000.

This column is provided by the faculty of the OSU Veterinary Hospital. The large volume of questions does not allow us to directly respond to specific email questions so please watch for your answer in the column. Email your questions for the column to [dvmoncall@postoffice.cvhs.okstate.edu](mailto:dvmoncall@postoffice.cvhs.okstate.edu) and watch for your answer.