

## AUTUMN DANGERS FOR PETS



With dazzling colors on the trees and harvest festivals abounding, many people love the autumn season. But, with many holidays and cooling temperatures, the fall could contain some potential dangers to pets.

Of course, many foods served at this time of year cause some of the biggest problems. Chocolate in the candy bags and fatty table foods served at the Thanksgiving table generate many frantic calls to veterinarians and emergency room visits. Even some desserts, like those sweetened with Xylitol, can be dangerous to your pets. When in doubt, don't feed food from the table to your pets.

Rodenticides, or mouse and rat poisons, are another problem as we start winterizing garages, cabins, or even our homes. There are four different types of poison and each has the potential to kill

your pet. Long acting anticoagulants are a very well known and widely used rodenticide. These products cause internal bleeding and signs may not be seen for 2-5 days. Thankfully, vitamin K1 is an effective antidote and is helpful when pets are taken to the veterinarian immediately. Cholecalciferol is a rodenticide based on Vitamin D3. This product increases blood levels of calcium, causing damage to the kidneys. There is no antidote for this poison. Bromethalin also has no antidote and will result in brain swelling. Pets that ingest toxic amounts will act “drunk” and potentially have a seizure. Finally, phosphides are used for gopher/mole poison and result in severe bloating. The “gummy worm” poison causes phosphine gas in the stomach. This poison can also affect you if you breathe the gas after your pet vomits.

Many wild mushrooms start to grow at this time of year. It is very difficult to identify wild mushrooms, so treat any exposure to mushrooms as a potential emergency. Your compost pile in your backyard is also dangerous to your pet. The decomposing organic material could contain mycotoxins that can cause hyperthermia, agitation, excessive panting or drooling and even seizures.

And, even though most people are aware of the dangers of antifreeze, thousands of pets are seen for antifreeze toxicity each year. Small amounts can be deadly to pets as clinical signs are not always apparent and may go unnoticed by the owners until too late. Pets will act “drunk” and may be drinking and urinating frequently in the early stages. Antifreeze poisoning needs to be treated immediately and can have a good outcome if caught early. Pet Kare Clinic can run a quick test on your pet’s blood to see if there is exposure.

Be sure to bookmark [www.PetDocsOnCall](http://www.PetDocsOnCall) and [www.MyVNN.com](http://www.MyVNN.com) as trustworthy sources for accurate pet health information.

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Information for these message points was provided by Dr. Justine Lee and the Pet Poison Helpline.