

Toxic Foods for Dogs



Apples, Apricots, Cherries, Peaches and Plums

- These five fruits aren't usually thought of as toxic foods.
- However, they contain a type of cyanide compound that can poison your dog if he eats enough of the stems, seeds and leaves.
- This can result in dilated pupils, breathing difficulties, hyperventilation, shock, and apprehensiveness.

Chocolate

- Chocolate is toxic for two reasons: the chemicals theobromine and caffeine, and its high fat content.
- Theobromine and caffeine are nervous system stimulants. They are toxic to your dog if he eats too much chocolate.
- Noticeable effects of overeating include hyperactivity, restlessness, muscle twitches, increased urination and excessive panting.
- Internal symptoms include increased heart rate and blood pressure.
- Seizures may occur in the most severe cases of poisoning.
- These chemical levels increase as the color of the chocolate gets darker.
- White chocolate has the lowest amount of theobromine and caffeine, followed by milk chocolate.
- Dark chocolate, baking chocolate and cocoa beans are increasingly dangerous to your dog.
- The high fat content of chocolate also makes it hard on your dog.
- Vomiting and diarrhea may result from overeating.



Coffee Grounds and Beans

- The symptoms of coffee toxicity are similar to the symptoms of chocolate toxicity, and just as serious, if not more so.

Nutmeg

- High levels of nutmeg can result in your dog's death.
- Symptoms include seizures, tremors, central nervous system problems, and death.



Macadamia Nuts

- Also known as the Australia Nut and the Queensland Nut, Macadamias are one of the mystery toxic foods when it comes to dogs.
- Although researchers still have not determined what causes their toxicity, as few as six nuts, running as high as 40 nuts, can cause severe poisoning.
- The symptoms that your dog can develop by eating macadamias include abdominal pain, vomiting, pale gums, stiffness, lameness, difficulty walking, tremors, weakness, and depression.
- The toxicity usually dissipates in 12 to 24 hours.
- Please note that the macadamia nut tree itself is also toxic to dogs.



Onions and Garlic

- Onions and garlic contain thiosulphate, the chemical that makes them toxic foods for dogs.
- If you feed onions or garlic to him regularly, his red blood cells may weaken and literally fall apart.
- The thiosulphate can reach toxic, even deadly levels, if he eats too much of either food.
- Without treatment, severe anemias and death can result from overeating these toxic foods.
- Humans have an enzyme that allows us to digest onions and garlic (although some people do have digestive problems with them). All dogs (and cats) lack that enzyme.
- This can result in vomiting, diarrhea, gas or gastrointestinal pain and distress.
- These symptoms might not appear for a few days, which makes it much harder to pinpoint the poison.



Grapes and Raisins

- The ASPCA has received about ten reports of grape and raisin poisoning of dogs. All the dogs in these reports ate from 9 ounces (250 grams) to two pounds (900 grams). They developed kidney failure.
- Scientists and vets still do not know why the kidneys fail, or the amount of raisins or grapes that causes toxicity.
- If your dog ingests these toxic foods, he will need aggressive, possibly long-term, treatment for the kidney failure.
- Lack of treatment can result in death. If you catch him eating grapes or raisins, call your vet immediately for advice and direction.





Yeast Dough (Unbaked Bread)

- If you bake bread, you know that the dough needs a warm, moist environment to expand.
- Your dog's stomach is a nice warm, moist environment, and so, the dough can expand to many times its size when first ingested.
- This distends his abdomen and can cause pain.
- Another issue with raw dough is the rising process itself. The dough rises because the yeast ferments it. The fermentation results in alcohol, which can cause alcohol toxicity (see below).

Alcohol

- Alcohol is a poison that happens to produce enjoyable side effects in humans, in moderation. Short-term overindulgence can kill by poisoning you, and long-term overindulgence can kill by destroying the liver and interfering with important body functions.
- Your dog is much smaller than you, and so is much more susceptible to the poisonous effects of alcohol, including death.
- Some of the signs that your dog has been drinking alcohol include its odor on his breath, slow respiratory rate, increased urination, staggering or a wobbly gait, excitement, depression, disorientation, behavioral changes, hypothermia, seizures and cardiac arrest.
- Be particularly aware of plastic liquor bottles, which he could easily chew through. There is enough alcohol in a "mickey" to kill a small dog.



Baking Powder and Baking Soda

- Although not really foods, baking powder and baking soda are common items found in the kitchen. They are both leavening agents, used in baked goods to create a gas, which causes doughs and batters to rise.
- Baking soda is sodium bicarbonate. Baking powder combines baking soda with an acid of some kind, usually cream of tartar, sodium aluminum sulphate or calcium acid phosphate, or a combination of the three.
- If your dog eats a large amount of either of these powders, he can suffer from electrolyte changes, muscle spasms and congestive heart failure.

Fatty Foods

- Excessive amounts of fatty foods can cause pancreatitis. Miniature and toy poodles, cocker spaniels and miniature schnauzers are especially prone to pancreatitis.
- Pancreatitis signs include abdominal pain, acute onset of vomiting, and diarrhea. The pain can show through a hunched posture when you pick up your dog.
- You can easily avoid pancreatitis by not feeding your dog oily or fatty "human" treats and leftovers, and by keeping your trash bin securely fastened.



Avocado

- The leaves, fruit, seeds and bark of avocados may contain persin, which is toxic to dogs.
- Mild stomach upset can occur if the dog eats a significant amount of avocado flesh or peel.
- Ingestion of the pit can lead to obstruction in the gastrointestinal tract, which would require immediate veterinary care.

Mushrooms

- Eating wild mushrooms is rarely fatal for dogs, but can cause kidney and liver failure, and can lead to vomiting and dehydration.
- Some wild mushrooms can be psychoactive.
- Signs of mushroom toxicity include an upset stomach followed by vomiting and diarrhea, excessive drooling and watery eyes, a slow heartbeat, lethargy, abdominal pain, jaundice of the eyes, and seizures.
- Save any uneaten mushrooms and take them to a mycologist (mushroom expert) at a university or botanical garden who can help identify the species.

