

Poisons and Other Hazards for Cats

There are many hazards in the home for a cat or kitten, and you should be aware of the following before you turn your new kitty loose.

Poisonous Foods

While cats don't beg the same way a dog does, they still can make it clear that they would like a little taste of what we're eating. Most of the time that is not a good idea. Cats have sensitive digestive systems and if they eat something they shouldn't, you will soon see it again. It is better not to give them any of your meal.

Some foods are outright poisonous too, such as:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Apricot and peach pits
- Avocado
- Cherries - fruit, stones and leaves
- Chocolate - all forms
- Coffee - all forms
- Garlic - all forms
- Macadamia nuts
- Moldy or spoiled foods
- Mushrooms
- Onions or onion powder
- Products sweetened with xylitol
- Raisins and grapes
- Salt
- Raw potatoes
- Yeast dough

In addition, ham and pork products, including hot dogs, sausages, lunch meat, bacon or pork chops contain fat globules too big for a cat's veins and can clog the blood vessels quickly. Mineral oil or vegetable oil found in canned tuna and fish products depletes the Vitamin E that is essential to your cat's well-being.

NEVER give your cat aspirin or other human medications without your veterinarian's instructions.

Pet Poison Hotline

Call 1-800-213-6680 or visit

www.petpoisonhelpline.com for a 24-hour helpline staffed by veterinary professionals trained in the field of toxicology.



Poisonous Plants

The following plants are poisonous or hazardous to cats:

- Aloe
- Amaryllis
- Asparagus Fern
- Avocado Plant
- Azalea
- Black Cherry
- Bloodroot
- Buttercup
- Caladium
- Castor Bean
- Christmas Rose
- Clematis
- Cycads
- Daffodil
- Daphne (Laurel)
- Delphinium
- Dicentra (Bleeding Heart)
- Dieffenbachia
- Elephant's Ear
- English Ivy
- Ferns
- Foxglove
- Four 'o Clock
- Gladiolus
- Golden Pothos
- Heavenly Bamboo
- Hellebore
- Hemlock
- Holly
- Hyacinth
- Hydrangea
- Indian Splurge Tree
- Iris
- Ivy
- Jack-in-the-Pulpit
- Jerusalem Cherry
- Jimson Weed
- Lantana (Red Sage)
- Larkspur
- Lilies
- Marijuana
- Mistletoe
- Morning Glory
- Mountain Laurel
- Narcissus
- Oleander
- Philodendron
- Poinsettia
- Poinciana (Bird of Paradise)
- Poison Ivy
- Poison Oak
- Pokeweed
- Rhododendron
- Rhubarb Leaves
- Sago Palm
- Star of Bethlehem
- Sweet Pea
- Taro Vine
- Tomato Plant
- Tulip
- Wisteria
- Yew
- Yucca

Cat Safety Hazards

- Electrical or phone cords or computer cords left dangling
- Toilet lids left up. A kitten can easily drown in a toilet bowl. The chemicals used in toilets can be poisonous to cats.
- Open fire screens
- Open Stairways
- Reclining chairs and hide-a-beds have mechanisms that can crush a cat or kitten who has crawled inside
- Fringe or any loose trim. Kittens have strangled when their heads got twisted in the fringe or a hole between trim and fabric.
- Dangling drapery or mini-blind cords are another invitation to strangulation
- Accessible garbage, especially any kind of bones. Bones can either splinter and perforate the stomach or intestines or form an intestinal blockage.
- Needles and/or thread; knitting and/or crocheting materials
- Rubber bands, which can wrap around the intestines or cause intestinal blockage
- Plastic wrap - a kitten can eat it, strangle on it, or suffocate in it
- Plastic bags - a kitten can become trapped and suffocate or get its head tangled in the loop and panic
- Styrofoam, especially packing peanuts, which the kitten may eat
- Cigarettes
- Yarn toys or feather toys - yarn can come unraveled and wrap around the intestines or block them
- Toys with easily removed and swallowed parts
- Cellophane - it turns glassy in the stomach and can cause internal lacerations
- Christmas tree needles, tinsel and decorations
- Open refrigerators, dishwashers, microwaves, ovens, washers and dryers. ALWAYS check for kittens or cats before shutting the door or turning on any appliance.
- Put away feathers and toys attached to ribbon or string, such as kitty teasers, after use.
- Kittens and cats will often eat feathers and swallow string. They cannot spit it out because of the barbs on their tongues, which will not allow it.
- Keep your workshop off limits. Cats will jump at moving objects such as drills and power saws. They may also swallow screws, nails, wire and other small parts.
- Kittens like to taste just about everything. Keep all cleaning products and other chemicals stored away and out of reach. Anything with phenyl, such as Lysol (check the label), is deadly to cats.
- Cats love certain scents and one of their favorites is antifreeze, which will kill a cat quickly. If your cat or kitten gets into antifreeze and you discover it in time, RUN to the nearest vet or emergency clinic.