

Humane Society of Elmore County News – 17 Mar '14  
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March is National Poison Prevention Awareness Month & **this week's article is from the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association (ALVMA)** reminding pet owners that pets are in danger, too.

This is a great time for pet owners to do a little spring cleaning and check their homes for any toxins which their pets may have access to. "Pets may be affected differently than humans by household items, plants, and foods. They are more susceptible to illness because they are generally smaller than people, and many foods that are good for humans are dangerous and even deadly to pets," says Dr. William Bledsoe, president of the ALVMA.

Below is a list of some of the top poisons pets are most susceptible to. They are as follows:

- Foods (chocolate, xylitol and grapes/raisins)
- Insecticides (sprays, bait, and spot-on flea/tick treatments)
- Mouse and rat poison (rodenticides)
- Human and pet medications
- Household cleaners (sprays, detergents, polishes)
- Fertilizers (bone meal, blood meal and iron based products)

Other poisons that are extremely dangerous include antifreeze and acetaminophen. Veterinarians have also seen numerous cases of xylitol poisoning (xylitol is found in many sugarless gums, candies and mints), human medications such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications and antidepressants and flowers. Symptoms can range from digestive upset and neurological signs, to liver and/or kidney failure. This is the perfect time of year to do some spring cleaning and remove any items that could be hazardous to your pets from within their reach. Sometimes induction of vomiting is indicated, while in other cases IV fluid therapy and oral charcoal therapy may be indicated. Poisons are fast-acting and can be fatal so do not hesitate to contact your veterinarian if you see any indications of poisoning such as vomiting, diarrhea, drooling/hypersalivating, inappetence, nausea, coughing or vomiting blood, weakness, lethargy or collapse.

The ALVMA encourages pet owners to take preventative measures to avoid poisoning incidents.

- Be familiar with poisonous items by checking the list at [www.petpoisonhelpline.com](http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com);
- Do not leave medicine bottles within reach of pets (dogs can quickly chew through a pill bottle);
- Create a pet poison first aid kit;
- Know the signs of poisoning in your pet;
- Be especially careful during holidays with candy;
- As spring approaches, be aware of all of the harmful plants and gardening items that could cause your pet harm;
- ...and last, but not least - always keep the number for your veterinarian in a handy location.

Visit the ALVMA website at [www.alvma.com](http://www.alvma.com) for more information on how to protect your pets from toxins.