



## Poisonous foods – beware!

Some common foods can be potentially poisonous to dogs and puppies, sometimes in very small amounts. Don't assume that human food is safe for your dog.

The food items listed below are particularly dangerous, should never be given to dogs and should be stored safely out of their reach. Take care when preparing and serving these foods to your human family, and make sure your dog doesn't get the chance to 'hoover' up after you:

Grapes/Raisins  
Chocolate (and caffeine)  
Onions  
Macadamia Nuts  
Xylitol

### Grapes and Raisins, Sultanas, Currants

Grapes and their dried cousins contain an unknown toxin which can cause kidney failure in dogs. Please be aware that raisins are more concentrated than grapes, hence more toxic. The toxic dose has not yet been determined.

Eating just a small handful of raisins and grapes has been shown to cause kidney failure in some dogs, whereas others have eaten large quantities and been fine. Don't take the risk.

### Chocolate (and Caffeine)

Chocolate contains theobromine. Theobromine and caffeine stimulate the heart and nervous system. Dogs (and cats) are more sensitive than humans to the effects of these substances. In dogs, chocolate and caffeine can cause seizures, coma and death from heart failure.

Plain and dark chocolate contain more theobromine and are more dangerous than milk chocolate if your dog ingests it. Theobromine stays in the dog's system for a long time and is a cumulative poison, so chocolate poisoning can occur if small amounts of chocolate are fed repeatedly.

Please remember that cocoa powder and baking chocolate also contain theobromine. Cocoa husk mulch (sold in garden centres) is highly toxic. Dog chocolate is safe because it has had the theobromine removed.

Coffee grounds/beans and tea contain caffeine so, again, ban them from your dog's diet.

Below is a list of most dangerous to least dangerous chocolate to dogs:

- Cocoa powder
- Unsweetened baker's chocolate
- Semisweet chocolate
- Dark chocolate
- Milk chocolate
- White chocolate

### Onions, chives and garlic

Plant of the onion family contain thiosulphate which can cause the destruction of red blood cells (hemolytic anemia) and potentially life-threatening anemia. Thiosulphate levels are not affected by cooking or processing. Raw or cooked onions, onion powder, shallots and chives can all cause toxicity. Occasional exposure to small amounts is usually not a problem, but continuous exposure to even very small amounts can be a serious threat. Garlic and garlic powder can have the same effect but are only toxic in much larger doses. Garlic used as a flavouring is usually fine.

### Macadamia Nuts

Macadamia nuts (raw and roasted) can cause dogs to develop skeletal muscle tremors, and weakness or paralysis of the hindquarters. The exact substance that triggers the reaction is unknown but the toxic dose is very small.



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## Xylitol

Xylitol is a sugar alcohol found in gum, sweets, baked goods and many other sugar-substituted items. While causing no apparent harm to humans, it is extremely toxic to dogs. Even small amounts can cause low blood sugar, seizures, liver failure and death for your pup.

## **Other foods which should be avoided:**

### (Seeds and stones of) Apples, Apricots, Cherries, Peaches and Plums

The fruits themselves are not toxic, but the seeds/stones contain a natural chemical (amygdlin) that releases cyanide when digested. This is really only an issue if a large amount is eaten and the seed is chewed up by the dog, causing it to enter its bloodstream. To play it safe, be sure to core and seed all these fruit before you feed them to your dog.

### Alcohol

Dogs are susceptible to alcohol poisoning. Alcohol can cause not only intoxication, lack of coordination, weak breathing and abnormal acidity but potentially coma or death.

### Animal fat, fried and fatty foods

Excessive fat in cooked and uncooked fat trimmings can cause pancreatitis.

### Avocados

The fruit, leaves, stem and pit are all toxic. The toxic substance is called Persin (a fatty acid derivative). Ingestion of avocado can cause difficulty breathing, fluid accumulation around the heart, vomiting, diarrhoea, generalised congestion, and heart failure. Currently the amount of avocado fruit or other parts of the plant needed to poison your dog is unknown. Play safe and don't let your dog have any.

### Broccoli

If fed in very large quantities (i.e. over 10% of the dog's diet) Broccoli can be toxic causing intestinal irritation.

### Cat food

Cat food contains proteins and fats that target the diet of a cat, not a dog. The protein and fat levels in cat food are too high for your dog, and not healthy. Ingesting too much cat food can result in upset stomach, obesity and pancreatitis.

### Cooked bones

Cooked bones can easily splinter when chewed by your dog. Raw (uncooked) bones, however, are appropriate and suitable for both your dog's nutrition and teeth.

### Corn on the cob

While small amounts of corn are safe for a dog to ingest, giving your dog an ear of corn can be dangerous. If your dog is determined enough (which let's face it, most dogs are) they will eat the cob and all. The cob can be a choking hazard and can cause intestinal blockage which could be fatal

### Hops

Can cause malignant hyperthermia in dogs, usually with fatal results. Certain breeds, such as Greyhounds, seem more sensitive to hop toxicity, but hops should be kept away from all dogs. Even small amounts of hops can trigger a potentially deadly reaction.

### Nutmeg

High levels of nutmeg can result in seizures, tremors, central nervous system problems, and even death.

### Rhubarb Leaves

Large amounts of raw or cooked rhubarb leaves can cause convulsions, coma and in extreme cases, death.

### Salt

Excessive salt intake may cause kidney problems. Salt should never be given to a pet to induce vomiting; increased sodium content in the blood causes the brain cells to swell (cerebral edema).



# Where Perfect Pets Are Made

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## Sugar

This applies to any food containing sugar. Make sure you check the ingredient label for human foods – corn syrup (which is a less expensive form of sugar or glucose) is found in just about everything these days. Too much sugar for your pup can lead to dental issues, obesity and even diabetes

## Sweets and chewing gum

Not only are sweets packed with sugar, but they often contain xylitol, which can lead to vomiting, loss of coordination, seizures and liver failure

## Tobacco

Tobacco contains nicotine, which can be lethal to dogs. Symptoms include vomiting, abnormal heart rate, tremors and weakness. Tobacco poisoning can occur within 1 hour of ingestion.

## Tomatoes

Contain atropine, which can cause dilated pupils, tremors, and heart arrhythmias. The highest concentration of atropine is found in the leaves and stems of tomato plants.

## Toothpaste and mouthwash

Human toothpaste and mouthwash often contain xylitol, which can lead to vomiting, loss of coordination, seizures and liver failure

## Yeast Dough/Bread Dough

Can expand and produce gas in the digestive system, causing pain and possible rupture of the stomach or intestines. Rising dough can also release ethanol, enough to cause alcohol poisoning.

## Keep These Foods Out of Your Dog's Reach As Well

While the following foods don't fall in a particular category above, you'll want to avoid them as well.

**Old Food:** You don't like old and mouldy food, so what makes you think your dog will? The bacteria in spoiled food contains all sorts of toxins that can be damaging to your dog's health. Feed them the freshest and best, dog-approved food only.

**Leftovers:** Small amounts of leftover food may be fine, but too much will unbalance your dog's diet. If you do give your dog table scraps, make sure to take out any bones and trim down any fat and check the scraps do not contain anything that could be poisonous.

**Human Snacks:** Crisps contain salt and can contain garlic and onion powder. Biscuits may contain raisins, chocolate or macadamia nuts. Bottom line — there's a reason dogs have their own food and treats made especially for them.

## **Other hazards**

These foods are not the only potential hazardous substances found in the home and garden. **Fertilizers, slug pellets, cleaning agents, antifreeze, detergents, mouse/rat poison, moth balls, vitamins, some garden/house plants, and many human medicines** can all be extremely dangerous to pets. Make sure these items are properly stored away from your pets (and children!).

Finally, if you're at all worried your dog might have eaten something poisonous, or if your dog shows any sign of illness, please contact your Veterinary Surgeon immediately for advice



## Safe Human Foods for Dogs

It is your choice whether or not to feed small amounts of safe human food to your dog. Dogs that are denied human food or table scraps are generally better behaved than dogs who do receive people food. These dogs do not beg because they know they won't collect any scraps. They also tend to drool less and bother visitors less frequently because they understand that human food is for humans and not for them. Below is a list of human foods that are safe for dogs to eat **in moderation**.

### Lean Meat

Lean meat includes meat without bones that have had excessive fat removed. If feeding chicken and turkey, the fatty skin should be removed. Lean meat includes the white meat from chicken or turkey and provides a tasty treat for your dog as well as a good source of protein.

### Eggs

Salmonella and biotin deficiency are two things to be cautious of when feeding your dog raw eggs. Most vets will recommend giving your dog a cooked egg over a raw egg. Eggs are an excellent source of protein and have a host of vitamins for your pup. Don't worry about cooking the egg in butter, oil, salt, pepper or other additives, your dog doesn't need those things, and they can be harmful to them as well.

### Fruits

Dogs can safely enjoy small amounts of:

Bananas	Apple slices
Strawberries	Blueberries
Watermelon	Cantaloupe
Cranberries	Mangoes
Oranges	Peaches
Pears	Pineapples
Raspberries	

PLEASE NOTE: The seeds should be removed from these fruits (or in the case of watermelon it should be a seedless melon) as most fruit seeds contain a trace amount of arsenic, which is highly poisonous (it's a small amount but why risk it?).

### Vegetables

The vegetables below are safe for dogs to eat:

Broccoli	Brussels sprouts
Carrots	Celery
Cucumber	Green beans
Peas	Cooked potatoes (not raw)
Spinach	Sweet potatoes

Vegetables make great low-calorie snacks and useful training tools. In fact, you can give your dog slices of carrots as a treat and a healthier alternative to other training treats. BUT: Stay away from canned and pickled vegetables as they contain too much salt.

### White Rice

Cooked white rice is a common recommendation for a dog with an upset stomach. Generally boiled white chicken and white rice are used to help firm up stools as well as nourish a dog that is having trouble getting any nutrition from food as a result of illness.