



ACETAMINOPHEN (Tylenol) POISONING

Is Tylenol Poisonous?

Yes, the administration of acetaminophen (tylenol) to dogs and cats may cause acute, serious illness and even death. Even very small amounts of acetaminophen can cause severe problems in cats. Dogs usually have problems with higher doses, over long periods of time.

But I Didn't Give My Pet Any Tylenol!

Many over-the-counter medications contain acetaminophen. **ALWAYS READ THE LABEL AND CHECK WITH A VETERINARIAN** before administering human medications to a dog or cat. Dogs and cats are not "small people." Their bodies react to medications differently than ours. Be careful where you store your medications, as dogs will occasionally chew up a pill bottle and the entire contents. They have been known to take bottles out of suitcases and purses, and off of high kitchen counters.

As cats are more selective eaters than dogs, cats are usually poisoned by an owner with good intentions. The most common cases of acetaminophen poisoning we see are in cats with an abscess or an upper respiratory tract infection whose owners forced the cat to swallow the acetaminophen tablet. *Do not medicate a pet at home without consulting a veterinarian.*

What are the Symptoms of Tylenol Poisoning?

The signs of acetaminophen poisoning in a **cat** may include swelling of the face and legs, brownish or bluish gums, depression, weakness, loss of appetite, difficulty breathing, salivation, vomiting, and death.

The signs of poisoning in a **dog** may include depression, vomiting, abdominal pain, yellow discoloration to the skin and gums, and loss of appetite.

Administration of acetaminophen damages the red blood cells in cats. This decreases the blood's ability to transport oxygen to the tissues and causes the cat to have difficulty breathing. Administration of acetaminophen damages the liver in dogs. In both animals kidney damage can occur.

Can It Be Treated?

Yes, it can be treated, but treatment for acetaminophen poisoning should be started immediately. The treatment includes the administration of an antidote, oxygen, fluid therapy, possible blood transfusions, and other treatments. Depending on the stage of the disease, the treatment may or may not be successful.

Prevention is Better than Treatment

Be aware that many types of medication including cough medicines may contain acetaminophen. **READ THE LABEL!**

Acetaminophen (tylenol) poisoning can be very serious and even fatal.

PLEASE CONSULT A VETERINARIAN BEFORE GIVING ANY MEDICATION TO YOUR PET.

Special instructions: _____

Thank you for this opportunity to serve you!

