



LUXE.VET
CONCIERGE WELLNESS & URGENT CARE



Why Candy + Dogs = Toxic Potion

LUXE.VET | Whiskers & Wine Halloween Edition 🎃🐾

- **Seasonal Sweets = Serious Risks:** Halloween treats can be hazardous for dogs, with chocolate, xylitol, raisins, licorice, and nutmeg posing significant health threats, including toxicity, organ failure, and even death.
- **Tonight's Mission: Awareness:** Our aim is to highlight the risks of festive treats, identify clinical signs of poisoning, and share strategies to protect pets during Halloween.



Why Candy is Risky for Dogs

Understanding Canine Metabolism & Holiday Hazards

Unique Digestive System

Dogs lack enzymes to process certain toxins/chemicals making them vulnerable to severe health risks from common holiday treats.

Heightened Sensitivity

Even small amounts of harmful substances can lead to serious health issues, necessitating careful monitoring.

Inquisitive Nature

Dogs often explore their environment, especially during celebrations, increasing the risk of consuming dangerous foods left unattended.



Chocolate: The Toxin

Why This Sweet Treat Spells Trouble for Dogs

Dangerous Stimulants

Chocolate contains theobromine and caffeine—stimulants that dogs cannot efficiently metabolize.

Dark = More Dangerous

Toxicity rises with cocoa content. Baking chocolate is most lethal, followed by dark, milk, and white chocolate.

Dose Matters

As little as 20 mg/kg of theobromine can result in toxicity. Just one ounce of dark chocolate can be toxic to a small dog.



Chocolate: Clinical Signs

How to Recognize Poisoning Before It's Too Late



Early Gastrointestinal Symptoms

Vomiting and diarrhea often appear within 6–12 hours after ingestion.



Neurological Effects

Hyperactivity, restlessness, tremors, and in severe cases, seizures can develop rapidly.



Cardiac Complications

With moderate to severe toxicity we can see an elevated heart rate and dangerous arrhythmias



Chocolate: Diagnosis & Treatment

The key is to act fast!!

Veterinary Diagnostics

- Physical exam
- Calculate toxic dose
- Bloodwork
- ECG (electrocardiogram)



Initial Decontamination

- Induce vomiting
- Administering activated charcoal to help reduce absorption



Supportive Hospitalization

IV fluids, anti-seizure meds, and cardiac support may be necessary for 24–72 hours depending on severity.



Chocolate: Prevention

Secure All Sweets

Keep all candy—especially dark chocolate and baking cocoa—sealed and stored well above pet reach.



Educate Family & Guests

Inform children and visitors not to share candy with dogs, no matter how cute the begging eyes.



Holiday Hotspots

Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day are peak danger periods. Increased vigilance is essential.



Xylitol: The Toxin

The Sweetener That Turns Deadly

- **Hidden in Common Treats:** Xylitol is found in sugar-free gum, candies, mints, toothpaste, and some peanut butters.
- **Insulin Surge:** In dogs, xylitol triggers rapid insulin release, leading to dangerously low blood sugar.
- **Liver Failure Risk:** Beyond hypoglycemia, xylitol can also cause acute liver disease within 24–72 hours.



Xylitol: Clinical Signs

Recognizing a Rapidly Escalating Emergency



Onset Within Minutes

Vomiting and weakness can occur within 30 minutes of ingestion.



Neurological Collapse

Tremors, disorientation, and seizures are hallmark signs of severe hypoglycemia.



Liver Symptoms May Lag

Jaundice, bleeding, and organ failure may not show for 1–3 days but can be fatal without treatment.



The Many Hiding Places of Xylitol

Medications

- Nasal sprays
- Vitamins
- Fiber supplements
- Compounded medications
- Antihistamines
- Cough syrup, cough drops



Personal care items

- Baby wipes
- Baby diapers
- Nose & face wipes
- Sunscreen
- Lip balm
- Face moisturizer
- Makeup: foundation, blush, makeup primers
- Makeup remover



Food

- Sugar free gum
- BBQ sauce
- Candy
- Chocolates
- Pancake syrup
- Jam
- Protein powders/shakes
- Peanut butter
- Pudding
- Instant coffee



Dental Products

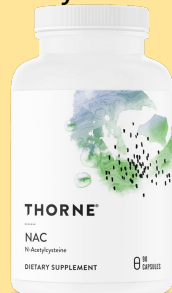
- Toothpaste
- Breath fresheners
- Dental floss
- Mints
- Mouthwash



Xylitol: Diagnosis & Treatment

Emergency Interventions for a Silent Killer

- **Confirmatory Testing:** Blood glucose, liver enzyme levels, and blood clotting times are key metrics for diagnosis.
- **Immediate Stabilization:** IV dextrose corrects hypoglycemia; fluids support kidney and liver function.
- **If clotting times are prolonged,** fresh frozen plasma is administered to replenish the clotting factors.
- **Liver Protection Protocols:** Drugs like N-acetylcysteine and SAME may be used to minimize liver damage.



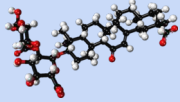
Xylitol: Prevention

Outsmart the Sweet Threat

- **Check Every Label:** Look for xylitol in sugar-free gum, breath mints, baked goods, and even peanut butter.
- **Keep Treats Secure:** Store all xylitol-containing products well above reach—even small ingestion can be fatal.
- **Educate Everyone:** Make sure family and guests know not to share sugar-free products with pets.

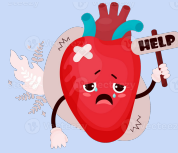


Licorice: The Salty Sweet That Sabotages Health



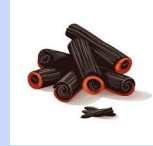
Toxic Compound: Glycyrrhizin

Licorice contains glycyrrhizin, which disrupts electrolyte balance by depleting potassium.



Cardiac Strain

Potassium loss leads to muscle weakness and abnormal heart rhythms in dogs.



Risk from Real Licorice

Natural black licorice is the main concern—artificially flavored candy poses less risk.



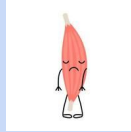
Licorice: Clinical Signs

When Sweet Turns Sinister



Gastrointestinal Issues

Vomiting and diarrhea may appear soon after ingestion, especially in sensitive dogs.



Muscular Weakness

Potassium depletion leads to lethargy, tremors, and muscle fatigue.



Cardiovascular Complications

High blood pressure and arrhythmias are dangerous late-stage symptoms.



Licorice: Diagnosis, Treatment, Prevention

Getting the Heart & Electrolytes Back on Track

Diagnosis:

- Bloodwork: Electrolyte levels are measured to confirm low potassium caused by glycyrrhizin.
- Blood pressure
- Cardiac Monitoring: ECG checks are used to identify arrhythmias and track recovery.

Treatment:

- Supportive Care: IV fluids with potassium supplementation and rest.

Prevention:

- Store all candy out of paw's reach and in sealed containers.
- Supervise snack areas: Holiday gatherings often lead to unattended candy bowls—monitor closely.



Nutmeg: A Holiday Spice with Hidden Perils



Myristicin is the Culprit

This is a psychoactive compound toxic to dogs at even small doses.

Toxic dose can be as little as 1 teaspoon of ground nutmeg or 2-3 whole nutmegs

Gastrointestinal & Neurological Disruption

Mild nutmeg poisoning typically presents as stomach upset with decreased appetite, vomiting +/- diarrhea.

Myristicin affects the central nervous system within 3-6 hours after ingestion & can last 48 hours

Found in Spices & Sweets

Nutmeg is often present in holiday treats—cookies, cakes, and eggnog.

Nutmeg: Clinical Signs

When the Spice Becomes Psychotropic



GI & Neurological Disruption

Mild nutmeg poisoning typically presents as stomach upset with decreased appetite, vomiting +/- diarrhea.



Psychological Effects, Tremors & Seizures

Myristicin affects the central nervous system within 3-6 hours after ingestion & can last 48 hours

Dogs may appear disoriented, agitated, or confused—signs of hallucination and anxiety.

Neurological symptoms like tremors and full-body seizures can occur with moderate to high doses.



Cardiovascular Strain

Myristicin increases heart rate and blood pressure, stressing the system further.

Nutmeg: Diagnostics & Treatment

Stabilizing a Spiced-Up Emergency

Diagnostics

- Baseline blood work
- Blood pressure
- ECG if heart rate elevated to evaluate for arrhythmia

Treatment

- Induce vomiting if recent ingestion
- Activated charcoal to prevent further absorption of the toxin
- Hospitalization 24-48 hours may be necessary for close monitoring of vital signs and neurologic function
- IV fluid therapy may be advised to address dehydration & electrolyte imbalances
- Sedatives to reduce anxiety & tremors
- Seizure medications if warranted



Nutmeg: Prevention

Baking Season Doesn't Have to Be Risky

- **Spice Jar Safety:** Keep nutmeg pumpkin spices in sealed, elevated cabinets.
- **Mind the Baked Goods:** Watch pies, cookies, and holiday snacks—dogs often sneak food left on tables.
- **Label Awareness:** Check ingredient labels on store-bought baked goods before offering even a crumb to your dog.



Raisins & Grapes: The Toxin

A Fruit with Fatal Potential

- **Unknown Mechanism:** We still don't know why raisins and grapes are toxic to dogs, but even one can cause kidney failure.
- **Common in Snacks:** Found in trail mixes, cookies, granola bars, and breakfast cereals—dogs can easily ingest them by accident.
- **Unpredictable Reactions:** Some dogs tolerate grapes, others suffer severe kidney damage after just a few. There's no safe dose.



Raisins & Grapes: Clinical Signs

Recognizing an Unpredictable Threat

GI Distress First

Vomiting and diarrhea often appear within 6–12 hours of ingestion.

Lethargy and Weakness

Dogs may seem unusually tired, wobbly, or unresponsive within a day.

Reduced Urination

A hallmark of kidney failure is decreased or absent urine output—seek emergency care immediately.



Raisins & Grapes: Diagnosis & Treatment

Saving Kidneys with Time-Critical Support

- **Kidney Panels:** Bloodwork and urinalysis confirm renal failure and track disease progression.
- **Early Decontamination:** If ingestion was recent, inducing vomiting and administering activated charcoal can help.
- **Extended IV Support:** Dogs may require 2–3 days of IV fluids and kidney monitoring to recover.



Raisins & Grapes: Prevention

No Safe Dose Means No Exceptions!

Avoid All Forms

Don't keep raisins, grapes, trail mix, or raisin-containing baked goods in dog-accessible areas.

Beware Hidden Ingredients

Raisins can be tucked into granola bars, muffins, cookies, and cereals—always check labels.

Train and Supervise

Teach dogs to avoid scavenging and watch them closely during parties or holidays.



Emergency Steps

What To Do If Your Dog Eats Something Toxic?



Act Immediately

Call your vet or ASPCA Poison Control (888-426-4435) as soon as ingestion is suspected.



Don't Wait for Symptoms

Delays reduce treatment effectiveness—early intervention is key.



Know the Details

Be ready to report what was eaten, when, and how much. Save packaging if possible.

<https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/asPCA-poison-control/people-foods-avoid-feeding-your-pets>

Quick Recap

Toxins, Targets, and Takeaways

Chocolate

Affects the heart and nervous system
The darker the chocolate, the greater the danger

Licorice

Causes potassium loss and arrhythmias

Nutmeg

Causes hallucinations and seizures

Xylitol

Triggers low glucose, seizures & liver failure
Found in gum, candy, and some peanut butters

Raisins & Grapes

Lead to acute kidney failure
No safe dose—any ingestion is dangerous



Thank You!

Share the Knowledge. Protect the Pack.



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- **Prevention Saves Lives:** Keeping sweets and spices away from pets is the best medicine.
- **Educate Your Community:** Share what you learned today with friends, family, and fellow pet owners.
- **Stay Vigilant Year-Round:** Toxic treats aren't just a Halloween issue—they're a year-round risk.