

# Dog Toxins

In 2013, the ASPCA Poison Control Center handled nearly 180,000 cases about pets exposed to possibly poisonous substances. The list of human foods that are potentially hazardous to dogs is growing. Check out the top foods your dog should not consume.

## Alcohol

Depresses brain function in dogs and can send them into a coma. It can cause further damage by causing their blood to become acidic. Dogs are not equipped with the protective enzymes that allow humans to imbibe reasonable amounts of alcohol without harm. And because most dogs are smaller than humans and are more sensitive to alcohol, it does not take much to cause serious problems. How much depends on the size of the dog and the type of alcohol consumed.

## Avocados

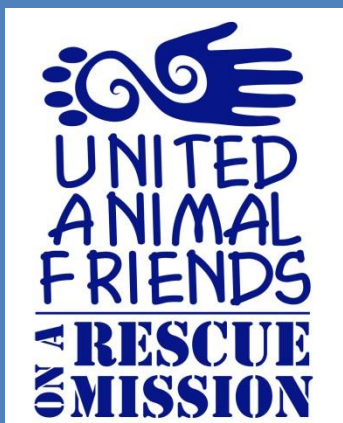
The leaves, fruit, bark and seeds of avocados have all been reported to be toxic. The toxic component in the avocado is persin, which is a fatty acid derivative. Symptoms of toxicity include difficulty breathing, abdominal enlargement, fluid accumulations in the chest, abdomen and the sac around the heart.

## Chocolate

The chemical theobromine can be fatal. Just 3 ounces (85 grams) of dark chocolate or 7 ounces (198 grams) of milk chocolate can cause vomiting in a 50-pound dog. Chocolate also contains the methylxanthine compound, making the combination of theobromine and methylxanthine a dangerous and deadly combination for our best friends. Dogs don't metabolize and excrete theobromine as fast as humans, causing toxic buildup in the blood. Signs of chocolate toxicity occur within hours - they include vomiting, diarrhea, increased heart rate, rapid breathing, tremors, seizures and coma.

## Coffee

The caffeine in a cup of java is a methylxanthine compound that binds to receptors on cell surfaces, precluding the normal compounds from attaching there. Caffeine in any form - coffee, tea, soda or chocolate - can increase a dog's heart rate, produce an irregular heartbeat and trigger seizures. It can also cause severe gastrointestinal problems.



### **Garlic**

Garlic in any form breaks down a dog's red blood cells and large amounts over time can lead to anemia and possible kidney failure from leaking hemoglobin. The reason: dogs don't have the necessary enzyme to properly break down the compound thiosulphate. According to the ASPCA, if a dog eats 0.5 percent of its body weight in garlic, it can show signs of poison.

### **Grapes and Raisins**

Toxicologists have found that grapes and raisins can cause acute renal and kidney failure. As few as 10 raisins or grapes could be fatal.

### **Macadamia Nuts**

Experts have yet to determine why just a few of these nuts can produce tremors, even temporary paralysis, in a dog's hind legs. High phosphorous content in nuts in general can cause kidney stones. It doesn't take much - a 10-pound dog can show signs of poison after consuming just 4 or 5 nuts.

### **Onion**

Their damage to canine hemoglobin is cumulative, so small tastes over time can be worse than wolfing down the whole bulb. In fact, 21 to 28 ounces of raw onion eaten all at once or 5.3 ounces eaten over several days can induce anemia. Anything onion, like anything garlic, also contains the thiosulphate compound and dogs lack the enzyme to digest it.

### **Yeast**

Like alcohol, ingestion of yeast can cause fatal damage. Active yeast found in raw bread dough releases alcohol as it grows. Yeast enjoys a moist, warm environment - like a dog's stomach. The expanding dough can prevent blood from flowing to the heart, distending the abdomen.