

Xylitol Poisoning in Dogs

Xylitol is a common sugar substitute found in a lot of products we use every day—like sugar-free gum, toothpaste, mouthwash, and even some vitamin supplements. But here's the catch: while it's safe for us humans, it's extremely toxic to dogs! Just a small amount can lead to serious health issues, including a sharp drop in blood sugar and even liver damage. That's why it's super important to act quickly if you think your dog has ingested something containing xylitol.

What is Xylitol?

Also known as wood sugar or birch sugar, xylitol is frequently used in sugar-free products. You might even find it in certain brands of peanut butter. To keep your furry friend safe, it's essential to be proactive. Make sure to store all human food, especially anything with xylitol, well out of your dog's reach. Check that there are no packs of gum lying around, and be careful with bags and pockets—dogs are sneaky when it



comes to getting into things!

How Quickly Can Symptoms Appear?

The timeline for symptoms can be tricky. Some dogs may show signs of poisoning very quickly, while in other cases, it might take up to 12 hours for symptoms to surface. But don't wait around! If you suspect your pup has eaten something containing xylitol, get them to the vet right away. It's crucial to intervene before symptoms appear to



prevent serious complications.

Signs of Xylitol Poisoning

Keep an eye out for these symptoms:

- Vomiting
- Lethargy or extreme tiredness
- Disorientation or confusion
- Collapse
- Seizures or tremors
- Unconsciousness or coma

What Should You Do If Your Dog Has Eaten Xylitol?

If you think your dog has ingested xylitol, don't hesitate—rush them to the vet immediately. Xylitol is absorbed into the bloodstream rapidly, and catching it early can significantly improve your dog's chances of recovery. Bring along the product packaging if you can, as it will help your vet know exactly what your dog has consumed.

Why Is Xylitol So Toxic to Dogs?



The reason xylitol is dangerous is that it tricks your dog's pancreas into thinking it's real sugar. This causes the pancreas to release insulin, which then lowers blood sugar levels to dangerously low levels—a condition known as hypoglycaemia. Xylitol can also lead to liver failure, but it's still unclear why that happens.

How Much Xylitol is Dangerous?

The amount of xylitol that can be harmful varies depending on the product. Just one stick of sugar-free gum can be enough to make a dog very sick, especially if they are on the smaller side.

How is Xylitol Poisoning Treated?

If you get your dog to the vet quickly, they might induce vomiting to eliminate the xylitol from your dog's system. This can greatly reduce the risk of serious damage. After that, your dog will likely receive an intravenous drip to help stabilize their blood sugar levels and will need to be monitored closely for a couple of days. If the liver is affected, the situation becomes more serious, often requiring specialized treatment.



Is Xylitol Dangerous to Other Pets?

Absolutely! Xylitol is toxic to other animals as well, so it's essential to keep all products containing it—and any human food—out of reach of all pets in your home.

By staying vigilant and informed about xylitol and other potential dangers, you can help keep your furry friend safe and healthy!