

Are Conkers Poisonous to Dogs

Ah, autumn! The season of falling leaves and shiny conkers scattered across the ground. While these nuts may bring back childhood memories of games and play, many pet owners might not realise the potential danger they pose to our furry friends. If your dog happens to munch on a conker, it could lead to serious health issues.

What Makes Conkers Dangerous?

Conkers, like acorns, are highly toxic to dogs if chewed and ingested. Not only can they cause significant stomach blockages, but they also contain a toxic chemical called aesculin, which can be harmful to dogs. This toxin is present in all parts of the horse chestnut tree, including the bark and leaves.



Recognising Symptoms of Conker Poisoning

Although it's rare for dogs to suffer fatal consequences from eating conkers, the situation can still be serious. Symptoms can appear anywhere from one to six hours after ingestion, but they might also show up up to two days later. Here are some warning signs to look out for:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Restlessness, discomfort, or abdominal pain
- Lethargy or tiredness
- Collapse
- Wobbliness and tremors

If left untreated, a dog may go into toxic shock. In some rare cases, respiratory paralysis has been reported, which can be fatal.

What to Do If You Think Your Dog Has Eaten a Conker



If you suspect that your dog has ingested a conker, don't wait—contact your vet immediately. They'll guide you on the best steps to take.

Treatment for Conker Poisoning

When it comes to treating a dog that has eaten a conker, hydration is key. Your vet might need to administer fluids through an IV drip and provide medication to help with vomiting and diarrhoea. In more severe cases, surgery may be necessary to remove any blockages.

Preventing Your Dog from Eating Conkers

Dogs are natural foragers, especially during walks, so keeping a close watch on them in areas with conkers is essential. Here are some tips to help keep your pup safe:

- **Don't encourage play with conkers.** Avoid games that involve chasing or catching them.
- **Bring along a toy.** Having a suitable dog toy on hand can distract your dog from any conkers they might be tempted to play with.
- **Remove any conkers promptly.** If you see your dog chewing on a conker, try to take it away safely—only do this if your dog is accustomed to having things removed from their mouth.

And remember, if your dog shows any signs of illness after being out and about, contact your vet as soon as possible. Keeping your pup safe during this beautiful season is worth the effort!