

Veterinary Pet Insurance Reveals A Top 10 List Of Plants Dangerous To Pets

Claims made to Veterinary Pet Insurance in 2008 for plant or plant product poisonings reveal that many common plants can be dangerous or fatal to pets.

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Courtesy Marylou Zarbock

Grapes and raisins topped the list of plants or plant products that poisoned pets in 2008, according to Veterinary Pet Insurance.

Pets seem to get into everything, and often taste or nibble what they find. Although plants are natural, ingestion of some can be toxic to pets. Veterinary Pet Insurance (VPI) of Brea, California, recently released its top 10 list of plant poisoning claims in 2008. What causes the most problems? Raisins/grapes. The average cost of a claim involving plant poisoning was \$427.

Here is the complete top 10 list.

1. Raisins/Grapes
2. Mushrooms
3. Marijuana
4. Lily
5. Walnuts
6. Onion
7. Sago Palm
8. Macadamia Nuts
9. Azalea
10. Hydrangea

“Almost all plant poisonings in pets can be prevented, but prevention depends on knowledge, thus it is important for pet owners to become familiar with which items can be toxic if ingested,” said Dr. Carol McConnell, vice president and chief veterinary medical officer for VPI. The key is to keep the toxic plants out of the pet’s environment. She warns that owners shouldn’t feed their pets table scraps that contain any of the toxic items and should also be aware of what plants pets have access to in the back yard.

In addition to the top 10 plant poisonings, VPI also received poisoning claims involving the following plants or plant products: delphinium, crocus bulbs, hemlock, rhododendrons, gladiolus, tea tree oil, poison ivy, nightshade, tobacco, poinsettia, oleander, brunfelsia, hibiscus, almonds, scarlet pimpernel, potpourri and kalanchoe.

Although not a plant or plant product, fertilizer is another toxin commonly ingested by pets.

Cats and dogs were specifically mentioned in the VPI press release on plant poisonings, but many of the same warnings apply to small animal pets, such as ferrets, guinea pigs, rabbits and hamsters.