

THE YUK REPORT

Expert Poison Information 24/7

Washington Poison Center

1-800-222-1222

Spring 2007

Springtime and Your Pet

Spring is a time of new beginnings. But, it is also a time to watch for dangers to our pets.

Chocolate can be fatal to dogs, hamsters and rats. Dogs love chocolate and will hunt the smell. Keep all chocolate behind closed doors or cabinets. In a small dog, even 1/3 ounce of baking chocolate can be very serious. Do not let your dog eat any kind of chocolate, from pure chocolate bunnies to brownies and cookies.

Bread dough rises and doubles in size. This can cause dogs and cats to need surgery if the raw dough is eaten and stays in the stomach. Even a small amount can be a problem, so watch when baking that your animals do not sneak a taste.

Large amounts of **onions, garlic, raisins, grapes, avocados, coffee, salt, fatty foods, cashews, macadamia nuts, moldy food, alcohol and some artificial sweeteners**, such as xylitol, can

be dangerous to your pets.

Gardening is popular in the spring, but did you know that **cocoa bean mulch** smells to dogs like chocolate and can be just as harmful? Dog owners should not use this type of mulch. **Tulip and daffodil bulbs** are poisonous and

Artificial grass, ribbons and tinsel in holiday baskets can cause problems for both dogs and cats. Cats seem particularly attracted to this kind of material. **Hard boiled eggs** left out of the refrigerator can spoil. Dogs will readily eat them off a table or left in the lawn after a holiday hunt.

Liquid potpourri can be dangerous to cats, birds or dogs if they drink it or lick it off their fur. Scents of some essential oils can be harmful to birds. Use these items in well-ventilated rooms, even in rooms where pets do not go, or do not use them. Some birds are even sensitive to air fresheners, so do not use them in a room with a bird.

Did you know...

- ... the WAPC helped 7,724 pet owners in 2006; 1,396 had been referred by their veterinarians?
- ... the WAPC gives out over 1,000,000 Mr. Yuk stickers each year?
- ... raising an additional \$50,000 a year would allow the WAPC to give a wide range of poison prevention materials to the public without charge?

a dog can nose them out and eat all they can find.

Lilies are a popular decoration, but did you know that all types of lilies are poisonous to cats? Keep these plants or cut flowers away, and remember cats can climb easily and do not know lilies are dangerous.

Always call the Poison Center at **1-800-222-1222** if you think your pet has been poisoned. Keep a bottle of hydrogen peroxide on hand to make your cat or dog vomit, but only use it if the Poison Center tells you to.

More info: www.wapc.org

From the Files

Experts the Experts Call

One of our staff took a call from a scared mother of a four-year-old, Brendan, who ate a tablet of seizure medication. The staff member calmed her down and assured her that Brendan may get sleepy, dizzy or have an upset stomach, but there was no danger beyond this and that the symptoms would be gone the next day. After answering all of her questions and setting up a time for a follow-up call, they hung up. As expected, within an hour Brendan started to get sleepy. Brendan's grandmother, not realizing that we are "the experts the experts call" and who was also in the home, became concerned and called their doctor. He immediately told them to go to the hospital. Grandma then got Mom to ignore our advice and took Brendan to the hospital.

When Brendan arrived, the hospital called the Poison Center for consultation, and he was able to be sent home without any treatment. The next day, the Poison Center called to check on Brendon, and by that time, he was doing fine with no more signs or symptoms.

Meet Mr. Yuk

Born: 1971

Location: Pittsburgh, PA

Adopted in Washington: 1973

His story: Mr. Yuk was created in 1971 by the Pittsburgh Poison Center at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. It is copyrighted for teaching poison safety.

Studies showed that the skull and crossbones, used to mark poisons, had little meaning for the children of the 1970's. The symbol had been in movies, cartoons, commercial products and amusement parks to show happy, exciting things like pirates and adventure. Moreover, the Pittsburgh Pirates baseball team used the symbol as its team logo causing the Pittsburgh Poison Center to seek an alternative.

Children at daycare centers were shown six different symbols on identical bottles of mouthwash often found in family homes. The symbols included a red stop sign, the skull and crossbones and what is now known as Mr. Yuk.

At the beginning of the test, each child was told that he might find bottles like this at home and was asked to show the bottle he would not play with.

The symbol that was least attractive to the children was Mr. Yuk.

The most popular symbol was, in fact, the skull and crossbones.

One little boy, who did not pick up a bottle marked with the green, scowling-face, did not, because "He looks yucky!" And so Mr. Yuk was named.

The Washington Poison Center, which was then the Seattle Poison Center at Children's Hospital in Seattle, was the first poison center outside of Pittsburgh to adopt Mr. Yuk as its poison warning symbol for families and the general public in 1973.

Mr. Yuk is used in many states and a few other countries. Last year, millions of stickers were distributed nationwide.

Today, the Mr. Yuk sticker is used by people young and old. It is a reminder to parents to keep items out reach of children. It is used by older adults to keep the phone number on medication bottles in

case they need help. Adults must remember that children, even if taught to stay away, should never be in reach of any poisons.

Each Mr. Yuk sticker has the poison center's toll-free phone number, which will route you to the poison center serving the area from where you are calling.

Call **1-800-222-1222** for a sheet of Mr. Yuk stickers.



Support Mr. Yuk

The Washington Poison Center is a nonprofit, charitable organization that relays upon community support. To make a tax-deductible donation, send a check or money order to:

Washington Poison Center
155 NE 100th Street, #400
Seattle, WA 98125-8011

Or, call 1-800-572-4104 x2367 to donate by credit card.

Mr. Yuk thanks you for your help!

WPC is an Equal Opportunity Employer



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