

## **Top 10 Human Medications Poisonous to Pets Revealed**

The Pet Poison Helpline offered tips for the prevention of pet poisoning caused by some human medications. Justine A. Lee, DVM, DACVECC, associate director of veterinary services at the helpline, said as far as animal poisonings go, “they are unfortunately very very common.” The 24-hour helpline is available throughout North America.

Below are the top 10 human medications most frequently ingested by pets.

1. **NSAIDs** (e.g., Advil, Aleve and Motrin) Common household medications called nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) top the list. The names include ibuprofen and naproxen.
2. **Acetaminophen** (e.g., Tylenol) This drug is not safe for pets, especially cats. One regular strength tablet of acetaminophen may cause damage to a cat’s red blood cells.
3. **Antidepressants** (e.g., Effexor, Cymbalta, Prozac, Lexapro) While occasionally used in pets, overdoses can lead to serious neurological problems, such as sedation, incoordination, tremors and seizures. Pets, especially cats, seem to enjoy the taste of Effexor and often eat the entire pill. One pill can cause serious poisoning.
4. **ADD/ADHD medications** (e.g., Concerta, Adderall, Ritalin) Minimal ingestions of these medications by pets can cause life-threatening tremors, seizures, elevated body temperatures and heart problems.
5. **Benzodiazepines and sleep aids** (e.g., Xanax, Klonopin, Ambien, Lunesta) About half of the dogs who ingest sleep aids become agitated instead of sedate. In addition, these drugs may cause severe lethargy, incoordination and slowed breathing in pets.
6. **Birth Control** (e.g., estrogen, estradiol, progesterone) Large ingestions of estrogen and estradiol can cause bone marrow suppression, particularly in birds.
7. **ACE inhibitors** (e.g., Zestril, Altace) Pets ingesting small amounts of this medication can potentially be monitored at home, unless they have kidney failure or heart disease.
8. **Beta-blockers** (e.g., Tenormin, Toprol, Coreg) Small ingestions of these drugs may cause serious poisoning in pets. Overdoses can cause life-threatening decreases in blood pressure a slow heart rate and aggression.
9. **Thyroid hormones** (e.g., Armour, desiccated thyroid, Synthroid) Large acute overdoses in cats and dogs can cause muscle tremors, nervousness, panting, rapid heart rate.
10. **Cholesterol lowering agents** (e.g., Lipitor, Zocor, Crestor) Most “statin” ingestions only cause mild vomiting or diarrhea. Serious side effects from these drugs come with long term use.