



The Dangers of Dogs Ingesting Xylitol

Xylitol is an artificial sweetener that is growing in popularity because it allows companies to make products just as sweet as if they had used normal sugar but with fewer calories. It's most commonly found in sugar free gum, but is now being found in baked goods, multivitamins, and even peanut butter. If ingested in large enough quantities it can cause gastrointestinal upset in people...however it only takes a few pieces to be life-threatening to dogs.

Why is Xylitol so bad?

- Causes a drop in blood glucose by causing a large amount of insulin to be released
 - Does the same thing in people but not a dangerous levels
- Studies show that high enough doses can cause liver necrosis
- New studies suggest that it can cause coagulopathies too (aka...bleeding disorders)
- It smells and tastes good so dogs love to eat it and will easily go through the whole package

What is the toxic dose?

- To cause hypoglycemia = 0.1g per kg of dog's weight
- To cause liver damage = 0.5g per kg of dog's weight
- A piece of gum in which Xylitol is not listed first is estimated to contain 0.3g of xylitol
 - If Xylitol is listed first the amount contained in each piece is higher and therefore will take less gum to cause problems
- So if we do the math a 75lb German Shepherd would need to ingest about 11 pieces of gum to experience a hypoglycemic event
 - A normal package of gum has at least 14 pieces
- Every dog is different so some may be more sensitive to the effects of Xylitol and may show signs after ingestion of much less

What products might contain Xylitol

- Sugar free gum
- Human oral care products
- Some brands of peanut butter....*YES, I said PEANUT BUTTER!!!*
- Some human chewable vitamins
- Mints
- Nicotine gum
- Some brands of fish oil.....such as Barlean's Omega Swirl

****Key take away note.....READ INGREDIENTS LIST** before giving it to your dogs

Signs of toxicity

- Vomiting, lethargy, diarrhea (bloody or black)





Missouri German Shepherd Rescue (MoGS)
Doggie Health & Wellness Team
Wellness Wednesday Series on Canine Health

- Collapse, tremors, and seizures
- Jaundice
- Death

Diagnosis

- History of ingesting products that contain Xylitol
- Symptoms
- Bloodwork

Treatment

- Xylitol can reach a peak concentration in the blood stream within 30 minutes of ingestion
 - Typically signs show within the hour, but can take as long as 12 hours
- If you know, or even suspect, your dog has ingested Xylitol please take them to the vet ASAP
 - You can make them vomit at home but please understand the risks associated with forcing fluids down your pet's throat....but it's still recommended to go to your vet
- At the vet treatment usually involves:
 - Making the pet vomit
 - Administering charcoal (absorbs anything left over in GI system)
 - Doing bloodwork to check organ function
 - Usually a recommendation to stay on IV fluids overnight to flush it out of the body

★ ALWAYS READ THE INGREDIENTS LIST IF YOU INTEND TO GIVE ★
HUMAN PRODUCTS TO YOUR PETS!!!!

Other good resources:

<http://www.aspcapro.org/sites/pro/files/xylitol.pdf>

<http://www.veterinarypartner.com/Content.plx?A=2859>

<http://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/NewsEvents/CVMUpdates/ucm244076.htm>