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# XYLITOL-BEWARE!

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**Artificial sweeteners can be extremely toxic to pets.**



Xylitol is an extremely common artificial sweetener found in many human food products. Xylitol is also found in many chewing gums and dental products because it helps decrease plaque formation. Unfortunately, despite these positive effects, xylitol is extremely toxic to dogs [cats, rabbits, horses, and ferrets are relatively resistant]. Dogs have a very similar taste bud palate to humans, so they are drawn to the same sweet tastes that we are. Dogs who ingest even small amounts of xylitol can suffer from dangerously low blood sugar levels [hypoglycemia], severe gastrointestinal signs [vomiting and diarrhea], seizures, and are at risk of liver damage and potentially DEATH.

**\*\*\*Toxicity is based on the weight of your pet, but a single piece of sugar-free gum may be enough to seriously affect a 10 pound dog. The higher the dose, the greater the risk of serious symptoms and liver damage.\*\*\***

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If there is any risk of xylitol ingestion, dogs should be seen on an emergency basis IMMEDIATELY. Signs may start immediately within 20-30 minutes, or some symptoms can be delayed for as long as 10-24 hours.

Sugar-free gum is the most common culprit in many cases, but the list of food products, supplements, and medical items containing xylitol is quite extensive.

Xylitol causes release of large amounts of the hormone insulin from your dog’s pancreas-this can result in weakness or trembling, lethargy, walking as if drunk, seizures or coma. Shifts in oncotic pressure result in dehydration as large amounts of water are drawn into the intestines and cause vomiting and diarrhea. High insulin levels can cause liver damage and may inhibit the patient’s blood from clotting.

Induction of vomiting at home is not recommended if your pet is already showing symptoms. Please call ahead, but proceed to the clinic as quickly and safely as possible. Even if your dog is not showing any symptoms, it is much better to treat them immediately. Vomiting and decontamination may be safely induced in the veterinary clinic under close monitoring and supervision. IV fluid support,

supplementation of IV sugars [dextrose] and use of medications to support/protect the liver are recommended. The course of treatment may be prolonged and span several days. A good outcome can often result if your dog is treated promptly and liver damage can be avoided.

Products with xylitol are becoming more common, especially as more humans suffer from diabetes or pursue a low-carbohydrate

**Please do not delay if your dog has had any risk of xylitol ingestion!!**

lifestyle. Be aware that this product that might be good for human health can be devastating to your dog—keep all products safely secured and out of your dog’s reach and please be diligent in reading and researching the nutritional content of any human products you may offer to your dog.



**XYLITOL** is a sweetener found in a wide range of products. It might also go by other names, including wood sugar, birch sugar, and birch bark extract.



**XYLITOL** poisoning can start within 20 minutes!! Signs include:

- Vomiting
- Decreased activity level
- Weakness and collapse
- Difficulty walking or standing
- Shaking or seizures
- Coma
- Liver failure
- Bleeding problems

**Xylitol poisoning can KILL your dog.**

Call your vet, emergency animal clinic, or animal poison control center if you think your dog has eaten a product containing XYLITOL.

**EVERY SECOND COUNTS!!**

**A nice database of products to avoid. is published at—**

**<https://www.preventivevet.com/xylitol-products-toxic-for-dogs>**

**Remember other common names for xylitol can include— wood sugar, birch sugar, birch bark extract. Also be aware that it may simple be listed as sugar alcohol or artificial sweetener. Please be careful and be diligent!**