General advice

- Store products in their original containers, **out of sight and out of reach** of pets.
- Ensure storage cupboard doors are closed securely.
- Replace the tops of containers securely after use.
- Clean up spills promptly.
- If you pet is licking or chewing at their paws after walking on a treated lawn, try and wash their paws to prevent ingestion of any garden chemicals.
- At Easter do not leave Easter eggs or other chocolate products lying around.
- Take care during Easter egg hunts to prevent access.

What to do if you think your pet has been poisoned

EMERGENCY ADVICE

- **Call Animal PoisonLine on 01202 509000 even if your pet is showing no signs to find out whether a trip to the vet is required.**
- **Remove your pet from the source of poison.**
- **Do not try to make your pet vomit – NEVER give salt water.**
- **Collect the poison and take a sample/ container with you if you are advised to take your pet to the vet practice.**

Animal POISONLine 24hr advice for owners

01202 509000

www.animalpoisonline.co.uk
24 hours a day (charges apply)

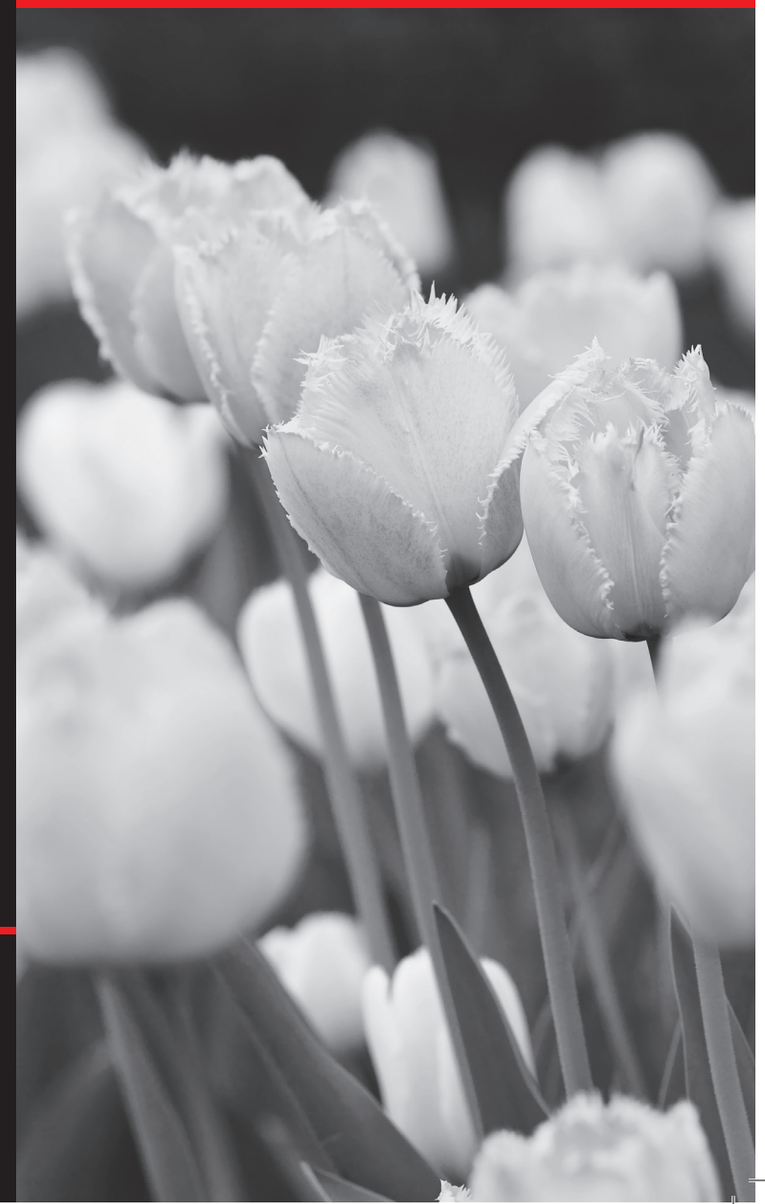
VETERINARY POISONS INFORMATION SERVICE

Animal PoisonLine is run by the VPIS, the UK's only animal poison centre, which has provided advice to vets on the management of poisoning in animals for over 25 years.

Animal POISONLine 24hr advice for owners

01202 509000

SPRING HAZARDS



Overview

As the weather gets warmer in the spring plants and fungi begin appearing and adders emerge from hibernation. Garden lawns may be treated with fertilizers and moss killers to improve their growth. Chocolate is also available in abundance around Easter.

This leaflet describes some of the potential hazards associated with this time of year.

ADDER BITE

The adder is the only native venomous snake in the UK. With the rise in temperature during the months of March and April the snakes emerge from hibernation. They are not aggressive but will bite if provoked. The venom can result in rapid swelling around the bite with pain, lethargy and collapse. There is also the risk of more severe signs. The adder is a protected species so leave it where it is and do not attempt to catch it – this is not allowed and is dangerous

CHOCOLATE

Chocolate contains a chemical that dogs do not tolerate well. White chocolate is generally not a risk but milk chocolate and even a relatively small amount of dark chocolate can cause agitation, excitability, tremors, convulsions and heart problems. Easter eggs and other chocolate products are often very attractive to dogs.

FERTILIZERS

Fertilizers, including bonemeal, are commonly used in spring and autumn and, although of relatively low toxicity, they can cause gastrointestinal upset and irritation to the skin.

HOT CROSS BUNS

These contain raisins or sultanas. Ingestion of even a small quantity of dried fruit can cause severe kidney failure.

LAWN FEED, WEED AND MOSS KILLERS

These generally contain fertilizers (see above), weed killers and ferrous sulphate (iron) to kill moss. All the chemicals are irritant and can cause gastrointestinal upset, and there is also the risk of iron poisoning which can result in severe gastrointestinal signs, shock and liver failure.

MUSHROOMS AND TOADSTOOLS

Fungi produce their fruit bodies (mushrooms and toadstools) in the autumn when the weather is wet and mild. Some fungi cause gastrointestinal signs, while others can cause hallucinations and behavioural changes; however some are extremely toxic and can cause delayed kidney and liver failure. There are thousands of species and they can be difficult to identify without expert knowledge.
If your pet has eaten a mushroom and there is some left, take photos of it (including photos showing where it is growing and the underneath of the mushroom, as there are features on the underside that are important for identification) and then dig it up and take it with your pet to your vet. If your pet vomits and there are remnants in the vomit – collect this, taking care to protect yourself. If you handle any suspect fungi ensure you wash your hands.

SPRING PLANTS

Pets may chew or eat spring flowers that appear as the weather becomes warmer. These include snowdrops, crocus, daffodils and tulips which may be growing in the garden or be available in the home as cut flowers. In general these cause gastrointestinal upset and some animals may require treatment to control vomiting and replace lost fluids.