

Wow... did I get disappointing information today...

Xylitol is Poison For Your Dog!!

Xylitol is a sugar substitute used in items such as chewing gum, mints, nicotine gum, chewable vitamins, and oral-care products. It is also purchased in granulated form and used as a sweetener for cereals, beverages, and baked goods. Caution - Xylitol is very toxic to dogs.

Xylitol has grown in popularity during the past few years, primarily because it is considered a good sugar substitute for those on low-carbohydrate diets as well as those concerned with the glycemic index of foods. Xylitol is also popular among diabetics because it does not cause dramatic peaks of insulin production after use.

Unfortunately, as the popularity of xylitol products has increased so has the number of reported toxic exposures to dogs. In 2003, the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center reported three cases of xylitol poisoning. In 2005, 193 cases were reported. And during just the first half of 2006, they received 114 reported cases of xylitol poisoning in dogs.

Most all of these poisonings occurred due to unawareness. Pet owners did not know that Xylitol is a dog poison.

Old research showed the primary Xylitol side effects on dogs was hypoglycemia (low blood sugar). Recent research shows it has been discovered to produce acute and possibly life-threatening liver disease.

Dogs seem to absorb almost 100% of xylitol into their systems. Humans absorb only 50%. Only a small amount of xylitol is needed to produce toxic effects in dogs

Watch for these symptoms.

After ingesting xylitol, dogs may begin to vomit and develop hypoglycemia within an hour. Some dogs will develop liver failure within 12 to 24 hours after xylitol ingestion. One reported case involved a 3-year-old dog that ate five or six cookies containing the sweetener. It became ill 24 hours later and died the next day. If your dog ingests xylitol call your veterinarian immediately.

Pet owners who use xylitol-sweetened products in their home need to be aware of its toxic effect on dogs. Please tell your friends and neighbors who own dogs. They need to ensure that their dogs do not get ahold of any of these products.

It could be as innocent as an owner sharing a cookie with their best friend. The results could be tragic.

Link:

ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center Press Release http://www.asPCA.org/site/PageServer?page-name=press_082106

Note: Xylitol's effect on cats is currently unknown. Other sugar sweeteners such as aspartame, saccharin, sorbitol, mannitol, and sucralose are generally regarded as safe for dogs.