

What Foods are Toxic for Dogs



There are certain foods that you should not feed your dog under any occasion. While individual cases will vary based on breed, weight, and other factors – in general this list of foods applies to all dogs and should be carefully followed to avoid accidents.

Just because humans like it, doesn't mean dogs will

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Foods that are perfectly suitable for human consumption, as well as other animals, may be toxic and even **poisonous** to your dog, posing a serious threat to its health and well-being. Why? Because all animals have very different rates of **metabolism**. Metabolism is basically the process of breaking down food and turning it into energy.

Please note that while we're attempting to add every food we can find that is potentially unsafe for dogs, there are certain foods that we may miss, so don't consider a food safe to feed to our dog just because it's not on this list. Do your research if you are uncertain and let us know by adding a comment below with your new information so that we can keep this list updated. **If you are worried about something your pet consumed, please call your vet promptly.**

List of Foods Not to Feed Your Dog

Here's an alphabetized list of foods that are unsafe and unfit for canine consumption, many of which are toxic for dogs. We'll be updating it and adding foods as we learn more. The ones in **red italics** are especially dangerous and often poisonous for canines.

And be sure to **look below this list for a helpful and sharable Infographic** to print out and keep on your fridge.

Alcohol – I'm sure you've heard of the birthday parties where the dog accidentally gets into some of the spilled keg beer, and then gets all silly to the amusement of the crowd. While it may be funny to you, it's not funny to your dog. Alcohol can cause not only intoxication, lack of coordination, poor breathing, and abnormal acidity, but potentially even coma and/or death.

Apple Seeds – The casing of apple seeds are toxic to a dog as they contain a natural chemical (amygdlin) that releases cyanide when digested. This is really only an issue if a large amount was eaten and the seed were chewed up by the dog, causing it to enter its blood stream. But to play it safe, be sure to core and seed apples before you feed them to your dog.

Avocado – Avocados contain Persin, which can cause diarrhea, vomiting, and heart congestion.

Baby food – Baby food by itself isn't terrible, just make sure it doesn't contain any onion powder. Baby food also doesn't contain all the nutrients a dog relies on for a healthy, well maintained diet.

Cooked Bones – When it comes to bones, the danger is that cooked bones can easily splinter when chewed by your dog. Raw (uncooked) bones, however, are appropriate and good for both your dog's nutritional and teeth.

Candy and chewing gum – Not only does candy contain sugar, but it often contains *Xylitol*, which can lead to the over-release of insulin, kidney failure, and worse.

Cat food – Not that they would want this anyway, but cat food contains proteins and fats that are targeted at the diet of a cat, not a dog. The protein and fat levels in cat food are too high for your dog, and not healthy.

Chocolate – You've probably heard this before, but chocolate is a definite no no for your pup. And it's not just about caffeine, which is enough to harm your dog by itself, but

theobromine and theophylline, which can be toxic, cause panting, vomiting, and diarrhea, and damage your dog's heart and nervous systems.

Citrus oil extracts – Can cause vomiting.

Coffee – Not sure why you would give your dog coffee, but pretty much the same applies here as to chocolate. This is essentially poison for your dog if ingested.

Corn on the cob– This is a sure way to get your dog's intestine blocked. The corn is digested, but the cob gets lodged in the small intestine, and if it's not removed surgically, can prove fatal to your dog. Additionally, too much corn kernels can upset the digestive tract as well so be cautious to not feed too much.

Fat trimmings – Can cause pancreatitis.

Fish – The primary fish that you need to be careful about are *salmon* and *trout*. Raw salmon can be fatal to dogs if the fish is infected with a certain parasite, *Nanophyetus salmincola*. The parasite itself isn't dangerous to dogs, but is often infected with a bacteria called *Neorickettsia helminthoeca*, which in many cases is fatal to dogs if not treated properly. If diagnosis occurs early on, the dog has a great chance of recovering. Cooked salmon is fine as it kills the parasite.

Grapes and raisins – This is one that lots of dog owners are unaware of. Grapes contain a toxin that can cause severe liver damage and kidney failure. We've heard stories of dogs dying from only a handful of grapes so do not feed your pup this toxic food.

Hops – An ingredient in beer that can be toxic to your dog. The consumption of hops by your dog can cause panting, an increased heart rate, fever, seizures, and even death.

Human vitamins – Some human vitamins are okay to use, but the key is comparing the ingredients (all of them – active and inactive) to the vitamins your vet subscribes for your dog (often you can get the human equivalent for much less money). Make sure there's no iron – iron can damage the digestive system lining, and prove poisonous for the liver and kidneys.

Liver – In small amounts, liver is great but avoid feeding too much liver to your dog. Liver contains quite a bit of Vitamin A, which can adversely affect your pup's muscles and bones.

Macadamia nuts – These contain a toxin that can inhibit locomotory activities, resulting in weakness, panting, swollen limbs, and tremors as well as possible damage to your

dog's digestive, nervous, and muscle systems.

Marijuana – Not that you would pass the bong to your dog, but if you do, you should know that it can adversely affect your pup's nervous system and heart rate, and induce vomiting.



Milk and dairy products – While small doses aren't going to kill your dog, you could get some smelly farts and some nasty cases of diarrhea. Why? Dogs are lactose intolerant (as are an increasing number of humans today), and don't have enough of the lactase enzyme to properly digest dairy foods. If you really need to give them dairy, look into lactose-free dairy products.

Mushrooms – Just as the wrong mushroom can be fatal to humans, the same applies to dogs. Don't mess with them.

Onions and chives – No matter what form they're in (dry, raw, cooked, powder, within other foods), onions are some of the absolute worst foods you could possibly give your pup (it's poisonous for dogs, and it's even worse for cats). They contain disulfides and sulfoxides (thiosulphate), both of which can cause anemia and damage red blood cells.

Persimmons, peaches, and plums – If you live in an area that is home to persimmon, peach, or plum trees, look out. Persimmon seeds and peach and plum pits can cause intestinal obstruction and enteritis. You'll want to make sure there aren't any wild persimmon or other fruit trees that produce seeds growing in your backyard. If you notice your dog pooping all over the place, and see a bunch of seeds or pits in their waste, you'll need to break out the saw and chop down some trees.

Rhubarb, and tomato leaves – These contain oxalates, which can adversely affect the digestive, nervous, and urinary systems.

Raw fish – Another vitamin B (Thiamine) deficiency can result from the regular consumption of raw fish. Loss of appetite will be common, followed by seizures, and in rare instances, death.

Salt – Just like salt isn't the healthiest thing for humans, it's even less healthy for dogs. Too much of it can lead to an imbalance in electrolyte levels, dehydration and potentially diarrhea.

String – While not a food itself, foods can often contain or be similar to string (ie. meat you've wrapped for the oven). If your dog were to eat a string, it could get stuck in their

digestive tract and cause complications.

Sugar – This applies to any food containing sugar. Make sure you check the ingredient label for human foods – corn syrup (which is a less expensive form of sugar or glucose) is found in just about everything these days. Too much sugar for your pup can lead to dental issues, obesity, and even diabetes.

Tobacco – A major toxic hazard for dogs (and humans). The effects nicotine has on dogs are far worse than on humans. Nicotine can damage your pup's digestive and nervous systems, increase their heart rate, make them pass out, and ultimately result in death.

Xylitol – A sugar alcohol found in gum, candies, baked goods, and other sugar-substituted items, Xylitol, while causing no apparent harm to humans, is extremely toxic to dogs. Even small amounts can cause low blood sugar, seizures, liver failure, even death for your pup.

Yeast (*on its own or in dough*) – Just like yeast rises in bread, it will also expand and rise within your pup's tummy. Make sure they don't get any. While mild cases will cause gas, lots of farting, and discomfort – too much of it could rupture their stomach and intestines.

Infographic: Foods that are Toxic for Dogs



Keep these out of your dog's reach as well

While these don't fall in a particular category above, you'll want to avoid them as well:

Old food – You don't like old and moldy food, so what makes you think your dog will? The bacteria in spoiled food contains all sorts of toxins that can be damaging to your dog's health. Feed them the freshest and best, dog-approved food only!



Leftovers – I know it’s difficult to keep your dog from feasting on your dinner left overs after they’ve had to sit there and watch you eat it all in front of them. But the fact is that if you feed them leftovers regularly they won’t be getting a proper diet. If you do give them table scraps, make sure to take out any bones and trim down the fat.

Check the ingredients – Bottom line is be sure to know what’s in the food you’re giving your dog. The items from the list above should definitely not be on there. You’d be surprised at how many foods contain sugar and caffeine, that you wouldn’t expect to without first checking the ingredient list.

Human snacks – *Chips* can contain garlic and onion powder, *cookies* may contain raisins, chocolate or macadamia nuts, etc. Bottom line – there’s a reason there’s food and treats made especially for dogs.

When in doubt, Ask a vet

If your dog is acting strangely, or experiencing even minor symptoms including weakness, lack of coordination, vomiting, diarrhea, etc. and you think he or she may have consumed something they shouldn’t have, seek a veterinarian’s attention immediately. If you wait too long, your dog might not make it. You can also [visit the ASPCA website](#) for the most up-to-date details on safe foods for your dog.

What People Foods Are Toxic to Pets?



Keep your dog on a healthy diet

Choosing to raise a dog is a big responsibility. Just as with a child, you’ve welcomed another living being into your household and family. We probably don’t have to tell you to

take care of your dog, but what people often don't realize is that as similar as the two can be, they also have very different needs when it comes to food. Ask your veterinarian what kind of food might be best for your particular dog breed as well as age and any special needs.

What if you cannot reach your veterinarian?

In an emergency when your veterinarian cannot be reached you should contact your local animal emergency clinic or **call the animal poison hotline at 888-232-8870**. You can also try the **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center at 888-426-4435**. Depending on the nature of the item ingested the animal poison hotline or your veterinarian may induce vomiting to regurgitate the item that has been ingested. If the item is something that is likely to cause further damage to your dog on the way back up, vomiting will not be induced and other methods of helping your dog will be discussed such as having your dog ingest an item which will bind to the offending food and neutralize it or surgery to remove the item that is causing your dog's problems.

Safe Human Foods for Dogs

There are human foods that are permissible to feed to your dog; however, even these foods should be kept to a minimum. Things that you can feed to your dog without worrying about side effects include:

Garlic — Garlic is OK — and even beneficial — for your dog in small amounts.

Lean meat – Lean meat includes meat without bones that has had excessive fat removed. If feeding chicken and turkey, the skin should also be removed as it can be a source of fat. Lean meat includes the white meat from chicken or turkey and provides a tasty treat for your dog as well as a good source of protein. Both raw and cooked, lean meat is great source of nutrients and protein for your pup.

Raw eggs (and cooked ones, too) – The most obvious problem here is salmonella, but Raw diet enthusiasts tout the power of a raw egg in your dog's diet. While the white contains the Avidin enzyme, which inhibits the absorption of vitamin B (Biotin), the yolk contains more than enough Biotin to even out the enzyme. So, when fed raw and whole, or cooked and whole, eggs are an excellent source of protein and a host of vitamins for your pup.

Fruits – Not including the fruits listed above, dogs can safely enjoy bananas, apple slices, strawberries, blueberries and watermelon. The seeds should be removed from these fruits

or in the case of watermelon it should be a seedless melon as most fruit seeds contain a trace amount of arsenic which is poisonous (it's a small amount but why risk it?). Fresh fruits are a great treat to assist in training your dog and can also provide your dog with a great way to cool down on a hot summer day!

Vegetables – Certain vegetables like carrots, green beans, cucumber slices or zucchini slices all make great treats for your dog. It's a good idea to replace commercial dog treats with baby carrots if you are looking to slim your dog down a little bit. Vegetables make great low-calorie snacks and good training tools as well. But stay away from canned and pickled vegetables as they contain too much salt.

Baked potatoes – A plain baked potato is okay to feed your dog but honestly it is not something that should be done frequently and should never include any toppings. A few slices of cooked baked potato can make a great treat for a patient dog at a meal time though.

White rice and pasta – White rice and pasta are frequently referred to as a potential meal for a dog with an upset stomach. Generally boiled white chicken and white rice are used to help firm up stools as well as nourish a dog that is having trouble getting any nutrition from food as a result of illness.

While there are certainly some human foods that are safe to feed your dog there are many which are unsafe and potentially poisonous when ingested by your dog. As a general rule of thumb, it is far better to be safe than sorry so avoid feeding your dog any human food unless recommended by your vet. Dogs that are not given human food or table scraps are generally better behaved than dogs who do receive people food anyway, they do not beg because they know they won't receive any scraps and they also tend to drool less and bother visitors to your home less because they understand that human food is for humans and not for them.

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