

Sago Palm Poisoning in Dogs



Sago Palm Toxicity

Dogs are known to chew on and eat plants, and sometimes they unwittingly eat plants that have toxic properties to them. Sago palms are one of these plants. The leaves from the sago palm can cause severe damage to the liver and potentially death when they are ingested by dogs.

The sago palm is also known colloquially as coontie palms, cardboard palms, cycads, or zymias.

Symptoms and Types

Symptoms seen with ingestion of sago palms include:

- Vomiting
- Blood in feces
- Bloody diarrhea
- Icterus (yellow coloration of skin and gums)
- Increased thirst
- Increased urine
- Bruising
- Bleeding easily (coagulopathy, DIC)

- Neurological signs such as depression, circling, paralysis, seizures, coma
- Death

Causes

The symptoms seen are the result of liver damage caused by a toxin called cycasin that is found in the sago palm. Liver disease may lead to bleeding deficits (disseminated intravascular coagulation - DIC), that is, abnormal bleeding and clots in the bloodstream, and neurological abnormalities.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis is based on a history of ingestion of the plant and on blood and urine test results supportive of liver disease.