“Dangers in the Garden”
Christine E. Watson, MS, BVMS, MRCVS, Dipl. ACVP
Veterinary Pathologist for Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
608-262-5432 x1232

- Focused on Dogs and Cats
- Focused on Wisconsin yards and gardens
- Lots of toxins for dogs and cats-major ones listed here
- Numerous toxins for large animals (Cow, Horses, etc.)

A. Naturally growing in Wisconsin:
   1) Mushroom toxicity
      a. Toxic species-Amanita species
      b. Common in WI and Midwest
      c. Toxin- Amatoxin; prevents DNA transcription
      d. Emergency-get to Veterinarian asap!
         i. Always bring some mushrooms your animal ate with you to your vet!
   2) Lakes and ponds-Blue Green Algae
      a. Common in WI and Midwest
      b. Toxic blooms of blue green algae
      c. Toxin-cyclic peptides
      d. Kills cells of liver
      e. Emergency-get to Veterinarian asap!
   3) Toxic doses of Metals and Minerals
      a. Too many to list that could be in soil
      b. Dose dependent toxicity
      c. Test soil?
      d. Mostly a large animal issue

B. Toxins that can be found in the garden:
   1) Flowers: Lilies-Cats
      a. ALL LILIES ARE TOXIC!
         i. Easter Lily-most toxic of all
      b. Leaves and flowers are toxic
      c. One bite of one leaf or flower is deadly
      d. Kills cells of kidneys
      e. Emergency-get to veterinarian asap!
         i. Bring in plant/flower to your vet with you
   2) Vegetables: Onions-Onion toxicity-Dogs and Cats
      a. Toxic component is n-propyl disulfide
      b. Toxic dose is variable
      c. Destroys red blood cells
      d. Emergency-get to veterinarian asap!
3) Other: Grapes and Raisins
   a. Toxin—has not been identified yet
   b. Kills cells of the kidneys
   c. Dose dependent toxicity
   d. Get to Veterinarian immediately

C. Placed in gardens and yards:
   1) Snail and Slug bait-
      a. Molluscicide
      b. Forms—comes in liquid, granules, sprays, dusts or pellets or on grains
         i. Dogs love to eat the grains that have been sprayed with toxin so beware of bright blue or bright green cereal grain in vomit
      c. A very small amount can cause poisoning and death
      d. Most pet owners don’t know this is a toxin!
      e. Toxin—Metaldehyde
      f. Emergency—get to Veterinarian asap!
         i. Bring in bait (or vomit) with you to your vet

4) Pesticides-
   a. Types: Strychnine, Zinc phosphide, etc.
   b. Typically causes seizures and other CNS signs
   c. Dose dependent toxicity
   d. Get to Veterinarian immediately

5) Insecticides-
   a. Types: Organophosphates, Pyrethrins, etc.
   b. Neuromuscular toxicity
   c. Emergency—get to Veterinarian asap!

6) Rodenticides- Anticoagulant rodenticide-
   a. Usually accidental ingestion
      i. “We had an old box in the garage”
   b. First and Second generation anticoagulant types
      i. First generation: Warfarin
      ii. Second generation: Brodifacoum, Bromadiolone, and Difenacoum
         1. Most common now
   c. Mode of action
      i. Block Vitamin K—can’t clot your blood—bleed out
   d. Emergency—get to Veterinarian asap!
      i. Bring in rodenticide box

7) Paraquat-
   a. Dogs mostly
   b. A widely used broad spectrum herbicide
   c. Kills cells of the lungs
   d. Get to Veterinarian immediately