



# Navarro Small Animal Clinic

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## Human Foods Are Not For Animals

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There is a long list of human foods that are unsafe and potentially fatal to your pets. It is important for all pet owners to be aware of these items for their pet's safety and well being. These items include alcohol, chocolate, coffee, caffeine, coconut oil, grapes, raisins, macadamia nuts, dairy products, nuts, onions, garlic, bones, xylitol, and raw bread dough.

Alcohol, including beer, wine, and whiskey, can cause vomiting, diarrhea, incoordination, depression, difficulty breathing, muscle tremors, coma, and even death.

Chocolate, coffee, and caffeine all contain the same active ingredient called methylxanthines. When a pet ingests this substance it can cause vomiting, diarrhea, heart arrhythmias, muscle tremors, seizures, panting, increased thirst and/or urination, hyperactivity, and even death. The darker the chocolate the more the methylxanthines present.

Coconut oil in small amounts is typically safe, however large amount of the flesh, milk, and oil from coconuts can cause gastrointestinal upset including diarrhea. Coconut water is high in potassium and should therefore be avoided as well.

Grapes and raisins are also toxic to pets. Early signs of toxicity include decreased appetite, diarrhea, and lethargy. Later signs include increased thirst and urination, vomiting, and foul breath. These signs are associated with kidney failure which is a common result of grape or raisin toxicity.

Macadamia nuts can cause depression, muscle weakness, vomiting, tremors, and increased body temperature. Signs of toxicity usually occur within 12 hours of ingestion.

Dairy products can cause gastrointestinal upset, including diarrhea because pets do not possess adequate amounts of lactase. Lactase is the enzyme that breaks down lactose in milk and other dairy product.

Nuts, such as walnuts, almonds, and pecans contain high amounts of fats. Large amounts of fats can cause vomiting, diarrhea, and even pancreatitis.

Onions and garlic can cause red blood cells to rupture causing severe anemia. They can also cause gastrointestinal upset including nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and diarrhea.

Bones can be a dangerous choke hazard and can become lodged in, obstruct, or even puncture your pet's digestive tract, which can be devastatingly life threatening.

Xylitol is used as an artificial sweetener used in gum, candy, baked products, and toothpaste. Some peanut butters even contain xylitol, so **make sure you read all labels before you give your pet any type of human food.** This ingredient can cause hypoglycemia, which can cause vomiting, lethargy, incoordination, seizures, and even death. Very high doses can lead to liver failure.

Raw bread dough made of yeast can lead to bloating since the yeast will incubate inside the stomach allowing it to rise. This can cause abdominal distension and discomfort. Once the yeast ferments, ethanol can be released causing disorientation, weakness, decreased body temperature, seizures, coma, and death.

Everyday foods can pose a serious health risk to your beloved pet. If you are ever concerned that your dog or cat ingested something on this list or any other substance you are concerned about, please contact your veterinarian immediately.