

Foods that are Dangerous or Toxic to Cats

When it comes to your cat, you want to make sure they have the **best kind of cat food** for their nutritional needs. From time to time, you may be tempted to give them table scraps and special treats, but bear in mind that certain foods can be poisonous to cats.

Here's a look at some of the most toxic foods for cats.

Onions and Garlic

Onions, garlic, shallots, and spring onions can cause damage to your cat's red blood cells and lead to anaemia. These foods are typically poisonous when eaten in large quantities, but exposure to concentrated forms of onion or garlic, such as onion soup mix or garlic powder, can also be toxic.

Cats with symptoms of lethargy, weakness, reduced appetite, pale gums, and orange to dark red urine should be taken to the vet immediately.



Raw Eggs, Raw Meat & Bones

Just like humans, consumption of raw eggs or raw meat can lead to salmonella or E. coli poisoning in cats. Symptoms of the illness vary, but can include vomiting, diarrhoea, and lethargy. Raw eggs also contain an enzyme that can lead to skin and coat problems.

Salmonella and E. coli can also be transmitted to humans, so be careful to properly wash your hands after cooking and keep your cat away from these raw foods.

Keep your cat from eating raw bones as well, as she could choke on them, injure their digestive tract, or damage their teeth.

Chocolate and Caffeinated Drinks

We've all heard that chocolate can be fatal to dogs, but it's just as poisonous for cats as well. Chocolate contains substances called methylxanthines, which can cause vomiting and diarrhoea, high body temperature, muscle tremors, abnormal heart rhythm, abdominal discomfort, increased thirst, and seizures. Methylxanthines are also found in caffeinated beverages and should be avoided. See your vet if your cat experiences any of these

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symptoms. As a general rule of thumb, darker chocolates are more dangerous than milk and white chocolate.

Alcohol and Raw Dough

Alcoholic beverages and foods that contain alcohol can be dangerous for your cat. Ingestion can cause vomiting, diarrhoea, tremors, disorientation, trouble breathing, coma, and even death. It's also important to keep your cat away from raw dough, as it can expand or create alcohol in the stomach. If you think your cat has ingested even a small amount of alcohol, take them to the vet immediately.

Milk and Dairy Products

Even though your cat may enjoy drinking milk, it isn't necessarily good for them. **Cats have trouble digesting the lactose in milk**, which can cause an upset stomach or diarrhoea. Most cats are only exposed to lactose from their mother's milk when they are kittens. Because kittens only drink from their mother's milk for a few weeks, their digestive systems are often not equipped to handle a reintroduction to lactose. So, while some cats have no trouble tolerating milk, they are not recommended to drink anything but their mother's milk while kittens, due to the possibility of digestive issues.

Grapes and Raisins

It isn't clear why, but even a small amount of **grapes or raisins** can cause your cat to become seriously ill and even experience kidney failure.

Repeated vomiting and hyperactivity are early signs, happening within 12 hours of ingestion. Other signs that can show up within 24 hours include lethargy, diarrhoea, reduced appetite, abdominal pain, decreased urination and abdominal pain.

Although some cats show no ill effects, it's best not to give your cat any grapes and to keep grapes and raisins off worktops, tables and other places accessible to your cat. If you suspect your cat has eaten grapes or raisins, contact your vet immediately.

Dog Food

Dog food is not toxic to cats, but it's not suitable for feeding to your cat long-term. **The Animal Trust** explains that dogs and cats have very different nutritional needs, with cats requiring more protein and amino acids like taurine and arginine. They won't get enough of these essential ingredients from dog food, which can lead to nutrient deficiencies and health problems over time.

Preventing Cats from Eating Dangerous Foods

Your cat's life and wellbeing depend on the type of food they eat. By keeping poisonous and hazardous foods out of their reach, as well as making sure they consume a balanced diet, you are helping them stay healthy.

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Here are some easy tips for preventing your cat from eating dangerous and toxic foods:

- Store foods out of your cat's reach. Installing cat-proof locks on cabinets may be necessary for a curious kitty.
- Do not let your cat on the worktop while you're cooking or eating
- Do not feed them table scraps.
It is especially important to be more mindful **during the holidays**. There is likely more enticing "people food" around, much of which can upset your cat's tummy or even harm them.

If you notice or suspect that your cat has eaten one of these foods, take them to your veterinarian immediately. While some of these foods may only cause your cat slight discomfort, others can be far more hazardous to their health. If in doubt, ask your vet for guidance.