

Arsenic Toxicity in Dogs and Cats

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Toxin
Arsenic

Source

Inorganic arsenic: Insecticides such as ant/roach poisons, herbicides, wood preservatives, and some insulation.

Organic arsenic: [Sodium caparsolate](#) and Filaricide (Two heartworm treatments and preventives).

General Information

Arsenic compounds cause reactions in the body that disrupt enzymes that are involved in cellular respiration, fat metabolism, and carbohydrate metabolism. They are especially damaging to the GI tract, kidneys, lungs, and skin.

Toxic Dose

Sodium arsenite: Dogs; 0.5-11 mg per pound. Cats; less than 2.25 mg per pound.

Sodium arsenate: Dogs; 3-6 mg per pound.

Signs

Vomiting, restlessness, drooling, nausea, severe abdominal pain often with bloody diarrhea with mucous in it, muscle weakness, trembling, staggering, severe dehydration, shock, paralysis, coma, and death.

Immediate Action

Induce vomiting. Seek veterinary attention.

Veterinary Care

General treatment: The induction of vomiting may be continued, gastric lavage is performed, and [activated charcoal](#) is administered.

Supportive treatment: Hydration is maintained with IV fluids. Medications may be given to soothe and protect the GI tract.

Specific treatment: Chelation agents such as Dimercaprol (BAL) or Succimer (DMSA) are given to remove the arsenic from the body. Acetylcysteine may be given to reduce the toxicity to certain internal organs.

Prognosis

Grave, unless treatment is started before clinical signs are advanced.