Moth Ball Poisoning in Dogs and Cats

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Toxin
Naphthalene and Paradichlorobenzene

Source
Naphthalene is found in toilet bowl deodorizers, moth balls, moth crystals, and moth cakes. Paradichlorobenzene is found in diaper pail, toilet bowl, and restroom deodorizers and in moth balls, moth crystals, and moth cakes.

General Information
The use of naphthalene is being replaced by paradichlorobenzene because naphthalene is about twice as toxic. Paradichlorobenzene is an organochlorine insecticide. Ingestion of it causes CNS excitement and seizures. It is metabolized to a compound that causes liver damage.

Toxic Dose
Unknown

Signs
Symptoms include vomiting, seizures, and an odor of mothballs from the animal's breath, mouth, and vomitus. Heinz body anemia causes pallor and increased heart rate. Methemoglobinemia causes the gums to become a brown or blue color. Liver inflammation may occur several days after exposure resulting in loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy, and icterus.

Immediate Action
Do NOT induce vomiting. Seek veterinary attention.

Veterinary Care
General treatment: Gastric lavage will be performed only if the patient is presented within 30-60 minutes of ingestion. Activated charcoal will be administered.

Supportive treatment: The animal will be monitored and treated for seizures, methemoglobinemia, anemia, and liver disease.

Specific treatment: Unavailable.

Prognosis
Variable.

Keep this and all other medications out of the reach of children and pets.

If you think your pet has been poisoned...

Contact your veterinarian or one of the Animal Poison Hotlines (listed below) if you think your pet may have accidentally received or been given an overdose of the medication.

**ASPCA National Animal Poison Control Center

1-888-4ANI-HELP (1-888-426-4435). $65.00 per case, billed to caller's credit card.

Follow-up calls can be made for no additional charge by dialing 888-299-2973.

There is no charge when the call involves a product covered by the Animal Product Safety Service.

**Pet Poison Helpline - 24-hour service available throughout North America for pet owners and veterinary professionals who require assistance with treating a potentially poisoned pet.

1-800-213-6680 ($35.00 per incident). Staffed 24-hours a day.

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