

Lead Ingestion Is Health Hazard for Dogs

Not only harmful to people, lead ingestion can cause gastrointestinal problems and seizures in dogs.

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In addition to posing a threat to children and families, lead ingestion also harms pets.

The primary source of lead exposure comes from deteriorating lead-based paint, lead contaminated dust, and lead-contaminated environmental soil, according the Environmental Protection Agency.

Pets that ingest lead may show signs of gastrointestinal disturbances, such as vomiting or diarrhea. Furthermore, lead poisoning can attack the central nervous system resulting in seizures and abnormal behavior, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) officials said.

“The risk for lead toxicity is as real for pets as it is for humans,” said Dr. Steven Hansen, board-certified veterinary toxicologist and senior vice president with the ASPCA. “In fact, lead poisoning in pets can often be the first sign of dangerous levels of exposure in the household.”

“Pet parents can take precautions to help prevent exposure to this extremely toxic substance, such as not allowing pets to chew on painted surfaces, keeping objects like fishing tackle in a secure container stored out of reach and checking for the presence of lead prior to beginning any old home renovation.”

Lead-based paint was banned in the United States in 1978.

Homeowners can call the National Lead Information Center at (800) 424-LEAD for information, and to find a professional who can test for lead. Renters may also consult with their landlords regarding lead testing in residences that were built prior to 1978.