

What to Avoid Feeding Your Cat

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As a responsible cat owner, you care about your kitty's health and well-being. But did you know there are a variety of common household items that are poisonous to your feline friend? Familiarize yourself with the following list of substances and keep each away from your cat to help protect her health.

Items to avoid	Reasons to avoid
Acetaminophen (Pain Killers)	Can cause liver toxicity and death.
Alcoholic beverages	Can cause intoxication, coma, and death.
Baby food	Can contain onion powder, which can be toxic to cats. (Please see onion below.) Can also result in nutritional deficiencies, if fed in large amounts.
Bones from fish, poultry, or other meat sources	Can cause obstruction or laceration of the digestive system.
Canned tuna (for human consumption)	Large amounts can cause malnutrition, since it lacks proper levels of vitamins and minerals.
Chocolate, coffee, tea, and other caffeine	Contain caffeine, theobromine, or theophylline, which can be toxic and affect the heart and nervous system.

Citrus oil extracts	Can cause vomiting.
Dog food	If accidental ingestion, will not cause a problem; if fed repeatedly, may result in malnutrition and diseases affecting the heart, eyes, and nervous system.
Grapes and raisins	Contain an unknown toxin, which can damage the kidneys.
Human vitamin supplements containing iron	Can damage the lining of the digestive system and be toxic to the other organs including the liver and kidneys.
Large amounts of liver	Can cause Vitamin A toxicity, which affects muscles and bones.
Macadamia nuts	Contain an unknown toxin, which can affect the digestive and nervous systems and muscles.
Marijuana	Can depress the nervous system, cause vomiting, and changes in the heart rate.
Milk and other dairy products	Some adult cats and dogs do not have sufficient amounts of the enzyme lactase, which breaks down the lactose in milk. This can result in diarrhea. Lactose-free milk products are available for cats.
Moldy or spoiled food, garbage	Can contain multiple toxins causing vomiting and diarrhea and can also affect other organs.
Mushrooms	Can contain toxins, which may affect multiple systems in the body, cause shock, and result in death.
Onions and garlic (raw, cooked, or powder)	Contain sulfoxides and disulfides, which can damage red blood cells and cause anemia. Cats are more susceptible than dogs. Garlic is more toxic than onions. The amount found in pet food is well below any toxic level.
Persimmons	Seeds can cause intestinal obstruction and enteritis.
Potato, rhubarb, and tomato leaves; potato and tomato stems	Contain oxalates, which can affect the digestive, nervous, and urinary systems. This is more of a problem in livestock.

Raw eggs	Contain an enzyme called avidin, which decreases the absorption of biotin (a B vitamin). This can lead to skin and hair coat problems. Raw eggs may also contain <i>Salmonella</i> .
Raw fish	Can result in a thiamine (a B vitamin) deficiency leading to loss of appetite, seizures, and in severe cases, death. More common if raw fish is fed regularly.
Salt	If eaten in large quantities it may lead to electrolyte imbalances.
String	Can become trapped in the digestive system; called a "linear foreign body."
Sugary foods	Can lead to obesity, dental problems, and possibly diabetes mellitus.
Table scraps (in large amounts)	Table scraps are not nutritionally balanced. They should never be more than 10% of the diet. Fat should be trimmed from meat; bones should not be fed.
Tobacco	Contains nicotine, which affects the digestive and nervous systems. Can result in rapid heart beat, collapse, coma, and death.
Tuna, exclusively	An all-fish diet is not good for cats. It can cause malnutrition and vitamin deficiencies. An all-fish diet contains a high concentration of polyunsaturated fatty acids and not enough Vitamin E. This imbalance can lead to a sometimes-fatal condition called pansteatitis.
Yeast dough	Can expand and produce gas in the digestive system, causing pain and possible rupture of the stomach or intestines.