

Ethylene Glycol Toxicity

Overview

Ethylene glycol toxicosis is a type of poisoning that occurs after ingestion of antifreeze or other fluids containing the ingredient ethylene glycol. Ethylene glycol is metabolized in the animal's body to several extremely toxic chemicals that are responsible for its potentially lethal effects. Without treatment, ethylene glycol toxicity is most often fatal.

Ethylene glycol affects the nervous system and causes severe kidney failure with almost complete cessation of urine output. Definitive treatment should be started as soon as possible after consumption of ethylene glycol (within a few hours). If treated promptly and appropriately, pets that have consumed ethylene glycol will not develop kidney failure and have a good chance of survival.

Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- Ethylene glycol toxicity is generally diagnosed with a thorough history and physical examination, bloodwork, urinalysis and an ethylene glycol test. In some cases, a kidney biopsy may be necessary.
- Treatment depends on the severity of the disease, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. Pets with ethylene glycol toxicity are generally treated with drugs that may induce vomiting if the ingestion was recent, activated charcoal, fluids, and medication aimed at reducing the toxicity of the ethylene glycol. The drugs most commonly used to reduce the effects of ethylene glycol are ethanol or 4-methylpyrazole. Dogs with acute kidney failure require more extensive therapy including dialysis. Discuss treatment details when your pet is diagnosed with this condition.

What to Watch for*:

- Vomiting
- Drooling



- Increased thirst and increased urination
- Lethargy
- Stumbling and staggering (acting drunk)
- Coma

Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!

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