

FACT SHEET



FS No. 91-003-1221

HEALTH INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES WITH PETS AND OTHER ANIMALS EXPOSED TO FUEL, OIL, OR OTHER HYDROCARBONS

Introduction

Dogs, cats, and other pets exposed to fuel, oil, or other hydrocarbons may require skin decontamination as well as other veterinary medical care. If you suspect your pet ingested, inhaled, or has oil or other toxins on their skin and/or paws, contact a veterinary professional.

About Fuel Oil and Hydrocarbon Exposure

Hydrocarbons are liquids that may be found in a garage, such as kerosene, engine oil, tiki-torch fuel, gasoline, diesel fuel, paint solvents, wood stains, etc. Some thicker products (e.g., coal tar, naphtha, or paint) can also cause similar problems.

Animals typically ingest these directly via food or water or through grooming, by breathing in vapors, or absorption through their skin (e.g., being dripped on or walking through a puddle).

At Home Precautions

- Only use bottled water or potable water for drinking and bathing your pet.
- Ensure your pet's food is kept in a sealed container.
- Monitor your pet's energy level and changes in behavior and appetite.

Common Signs to Watch For:

- Vomiting
- Drooling
- Increased respiratory rate and/or difficulty breathing
- Coughing
- Skin irritation
- Eye irritation (redness, tearing, pawing at the face)
- Incoordination (stumbling, "looking drunk")
- Diarrhea

Call for Help

Always contact your veterinary team first for your own safety as well as for your pet's. This can include your local veterinarian, the Pet Poison Hotline at 855-764-7661, or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center at 888-426-4435 or <https://www.aspca.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control>.

Your veterinary team may tell you to wash contaminated skin with soap or mild (dish) detergents and lots of lukewarm water without brushing or scrubbing the skin.

If an animal ingested hydrocarbons or other oily substances, you should NOT induce vomiting, as it can increase the risk of aspiration pneumonia (caused by vomit being inhaled into the lungs).

U.S. Army Public Health Center, Animal Health Division
8252 Blackhawk Road, Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21010
410-436-4158 or DSN 584-4158
usarmy.apg.medcom-aphc.mbx.iph-vet@mail.mil
<https://www.milsuite.mil/book/community/spaces/armyveterinaryservices>
Approved for public release; distribution unlimited

Help the Veterinary Team Help you - If you think your pet has been exposed to a toxic substance (ingestion, inhalation, skin contact), call your veterinarian and be ready with—

- Your name, address, and phone number;
- Details about the exposure;
- The product container (if available);
- Species, breed, age, estimated weight, and number of animals involved; and
- Symptoms your pet is experiencing.

Reference:

Merck Veterinary Manual – Petroleum Product Poisoning. <https://www.merckvetmanual.com/>