

# **Tobacco Toxicity**

Nicotine is toxic to our pets, too. The most common source of nicotine is tobacco products like cigarettes, cigarette butts, and even nicotine gum and patches. Some pets are attracted to products like chewing tobacco that are supplemented with flavors such as honey, molasses, syrups and other sugars.

The clinical signs of toxicity are dependent upon the amount and type of nicotine ingested relative to your dog's body weight. The signs of toxicity are dose-dependent and generally begin within one hour of ingestion. Many dogs will vomit naturally after ingestion.

When large amounts are consumed, the effects can be life-threatening, but even small amounts can induce symptoms. Without treatment, nicotine toxicity can cause paralysis of the breathing muscles and your dog may die from an inability to breathe, sometimes within a few hours. If your pet exhibits any of the following symptoms, call your veterinarian.

- Tremors
- Weakness
- Stumbling and/or incoordination
- Depression
- Hyperactivity
- Lethargy (in high doses)
- Fast breathing or difficulty breathing
- Drooling
- Dilated pupils
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Possible Seizures
- Collapse
- Either bradycardia (slow heart rate), tachycardia (high heart rate) and/or cardiac arrhythmias