

This year, compared to previous years, the Northeast is experiencing an increased population of rodents. Cold temperatures and winter precipitation are driving them to find warmth and food and, like it or not, they are moving in! To prevent these unwanted roommates from causing damage in our homes, rodenticides are often used. To keep our fur-families (and humans!) as safe as possible, we would like to discuss products available that, if ingested, may be more treatable than others in their class. Each poison product creates toxic effects and most require some degree of treatment. Several types include ingredients containing:

Long-Acting anticoagulants: ANTIDOTE = Treatment with Vitamin K. These anticoagulants prevent the blood from clotting, which leads to internal bleeding if not treated properly. Toxicity varies for animals, creating more risk for our older or very young animal companions. Cats tend to be more resistant, although they not immune to toxicity. Dogs tend to be very sensitive and almost always require medical treatment.

Cholecalciferols (vitamin D3), NO ANTIDOTE: The most dangerous and should be avoided when possible, especially for households with animals. Even small amounts can be fatal for any animal, and almost all ingestion is at the very least, toxic. Prompt aggressive treatment and monitoring is typically required. Signs of D3 poisoning may not be noticed for 1-2 days after exposure. Symptoms include increased thirst and urination, vomiting, decrease of appetite, weakness/lethargy, and possibly an ammonia smell to the breath.

Bromethalin, NO ANTIDOTE: A Neurotoxin with long-lasting effects (requiring longer term hospital care) and is especially toxic to cats, although is toxic to dogs as well.

Zinc, Calcium and aluminum phosphides, NO ANTIDOTE: These are used mainly in other animal baits, but some mouse and rat baits contain these poisons. These release toxic gases, and once in the stomach, result in serious gastrointestinal issues and possible liver damage, or shock.

If you must use a rodenticide on your property, place in an area that is not accessible to your companion animal. If you have a choice to a rodenticide with long-acting anticoagulants, which are more treatable than other poisons on the market, we recommend this, however, these might not be as accessible after January of 2018 in response to EPA regulations that have restricted regulations and banned the use of second-generation anticoagulants. Buyer beware, most rodenticides sold for *residential* use will most likely contain **cholecalciferol** or **bromethalin**, however many pest control companies that service commercial customers are still using anticoagulants.

If your animal has consumed any rodenticide product, call your veterinarian immediately. Please try and provide the following information to assist in the most effective treatment for your animal companion: rodenticide packaging to identify the type of poison, how much of the rodenticide was ingested, and the approximate time the poison was ingested.