

Toads secrete a substance that can irritate a dog's eyes or tongue. Catching and chewing a toad can cause excessive salivation and sometimes disorientation, but usually nothing very serious. If your dog has caught a toad, flushing his mouth with water to relieve the unpleasant symptoms is usually all that's needed. **But.....** there are some **Deadly** exceptions!

Several species of giant toads are a serious threat to pets. The Colorado River Toad, found in Southwestern states from Arizona to Southern California, and the Giant Brown Toad (also known as Marine Toads, Cane Toads or Bufo Toads) found in South Texas and Florida, are the two most common poisonous toads in the U.S. There are also a large number of Bufo Toads in Hawaii. These giant toads can grow to be 4" to about 9" long and to weigh more than 2 pounds.



Bufo(Cane) Toad

Unlike other toads who only eat live, moving insects, giant toads will climb into outdoor food bowls and eat dog food. This leads to toad catching and canine poisoning. There have even been rare cases where giant toads have just sat on the rim of a dog's water dish and left enough toxin to make the dog sick.

Drooling, head shaking, pawing at the mouth, crying, and attempting to vomit are some symptoms that a pet has had contact with these toads. Symptoms of toad poisoning in dogs can include heavy drooling, head-shaking, vomiting, diarrhea, bright red gums, weakness, loss of coordination, fever, irregular heartbeat, difficult breathing, tightly clamped jaws, convulsions, and even death.

Veterinary treatment, among other measures, might include an EKG to detect an abnormal heart rhythm and, if present, cardiac medication to combat it.; medication to reduce fever, medication to control seizures and IV fluids.

If you live in an area where giant toads can be found, there are some things you can do to protect your dog from a tragic encounter with them.

- Toads are nocturnal animals. Turn on outdoor lights and don't allow your dog outside alone after dark.
- Toads are also seen more often in wet weather. When it is raining, any time of day, always accompany your dog outside, and be extra watchful.
- Inspect areas around plants and shrubs and carefully check your yard for toads before taking your dog outside during early morning hours.
- If your dog has had contact with a giant toad, place a hose along the inside of the dog's mouth, point the dog's head downward so the water won't be swallowed and flush its mouth with water to remove all trace of the poison. While flushing, rub the gums and rub the inside of its mouth. Continue until the gums and the inside of the mouth no longer feel slimy, then call your Vet.
- If you suspect toad poisoning in your dog, get prompt veterinary treatment.