The Veterinary Poisons Information Service (VPIS) is a 24-hour telephone emergency service for veterinary professionals providing information on the management of actual and suspected poisoning in animals.

Prevention of lily poisoning

- If you have a cat do not grow lilies in your home or garden.
- Remove any lilies from bouquets of flowers and dispose of them safely.
- Do not allow your cat to play with packaging or boxes that have been used to transport bouquets of flowers.

What to do if you think your pet has been poisoned

EMERGENCY ADVICE

- Remove your pet from the source of poison.
- Do not try to make your pet vomit.
- Contact your veterinary surgeon for advice - do not delay seeking advice even if your pet is well. Your vet will ask for details of what has happened.
- Collect the poison and take a sample with you if you are advised to take your pet to the practice.
- Remember to protect yourself and others.

Contact details for your vet:

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POISONING IN PETS - FOCUS ON...

Lily poisoning in cats
Initial signs of lily poisoning usually start within 1 to 6 hours of ingestion.

Initial signs include:
- Vomiting
- Reduced appetite
- Drooling
- Lethargy
- Weakness

After this kidney failure starts to develop which may cause:
- Increased and then reduced urine output
- More vomiting
- Depression
- Thirst
- Painful kidneys
- Convulsions

What are lilies?
Lilies, that is, *Lilium* (true lily) and *Hemerocallis* (day lily) species, are poisonous to cats and cause kidney failure.

Other flowers and plants that are also called ‘lilies’ (e.g. peace lily) may also be toxic, but are not discussed in this leaflet.

The toxic chemicals and the mechanism of lily poisoning are unknown but all parts of the plant are thought to be toxic including the leaves, flowers and pollen.

Ingestion of even a small quantity (e.g. less than one leaf or part of a flower), as well as grooming pollen from the fur, is enough to potentially cause severe poisoning in a cat.

How is lily poisoning treated?
- If your cat has eaten any part of a lily, even the pollen - contact your vet immediately.
- Wash any pollen off the fur and face immediately to prevent further ingestion.
- Your vet will assess the amount ingested and determine whether activated charcoal should be given. This absorbs toxins and can help reduce further absorption from the stomach.
- Your vet will take blood and urine samples to check and monitor your cat’s kidney function.
- Other treatments may include intravenous fluid therapy for 2 days and monitoring of urine output.

Outcome of lily poisoning
Cats that are treated promptly after lily ingestion (before they develop kidney problems) usually recover fully, but cats that develop kidney failure have a more guarded prognosis.