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Xylitol

The Animal Poison Control Center of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has managed a substantially increased number of cases involving xylitol poisoning in dogs. Found in sugar-free chewing gum, candy, and baked goods, xylitol is a sweetener that can cause serious and sometimes life-threatening problems for pets. Xylitol causes insulin release in the dog (not in people). Liver failure has been associated with prolonged hypoglycemia.

Canines who have ingested significant amounts of gum or candy solely or largely containing xylitol may develop a sudden drop in blood sugar (hypoglycemia), resulting in depression, loss of coordination & seizures. "These signs can develop quite rapidly, at times less than 30 minutes after ingestion," says Dr. Eric Dunayer, consulting veterinarian for the APCC. "Therefore, it is important that pet owners seek veterinary treatment immediately." With smaller concentrations of xylitol, the onset of clinical signs could be delayed as much as 12 hours after ingestion. He also said that there appears to be a strong link between xylitol ingestions and the development of liver failure in dogs

Doses as low as 0.07grams/pound have caused hypoglycemia in dogs. A single pudding cup contains 7 g of xylitol and could cause hypoglycemia in a 100-lb dog! Products containing xylitol have increased markedly in the last few years. It behooves all pet owners who have sugar-free products around to be very careful.