



## Animal Clinic of Michigan City

### Tylenol and Ibuprofen Poisoning

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and ibuprofen (Motrin and Advil) are common household anti-inflammatories in most of our medicine cabinets. A popular misconception is that if it is safe for us then it is safe for our pets. When it comes to acetaminophen and ibuprofen, though, this is far from the truth.

When our friends are painful and uncomfortable we want to relieve their pain. It is easy to go to the medicine cabinet and grab the first thing that we have available. Using Advil or Tylenol on our pets can be harmful and even deadly. Because of the process by which our cats and dogs break down these products, they can cause severe liver, kidney, and stomach diseases.

When broken down by the body, most of the by products of Tylenol and Advil are toxic to the liver and kidneys. In fact, ½ of a Tylenol tablet is enough to cause severe liver damage and failure in a cat. Advil can lead to stomach ulcers and perforation and even to kidney failure by inhibiting blood flow into the kidneys. Needless to say the risks of using Tylenol and Advil most definitely do not outweigh the benefits.

Signs of poisoning include stomach pain, vomiting, anemia, severe liver and kidney failure, and sometimes coma and death. The first step is to get rid of the poison by inducing vomiting (if ingestion occurred within the last 2-4 hours). The next step in treatment is to stabilize our friends and then support the liver and kidney. This requires many days of hospitalization, intravenous (IV) fluids, and multiple blood panels. If the stomach perforates (ruptures), then emergency surgery is necessary. Once a pet is stable and eating then they often require long term monitoring and kidney or liver supplements. Often, due to the destructive nature of the by-products, there is permanent damage and loss of the kidney and liver function.

Prevention is simple. **Don't use Tylenol or Advil.** There are many veterinary approved anti-inflammatory products available. Not only are they 100-200 times as safe, they are also 100-200 times stronger than over-the-counter human products. At the Animal Clinic of Michigan City we recommend Metacam or Tramadol for sudden pain. For long-standing conditions, such as arthritis, we often use safer supplements like Glucosamine Sulfates, Duralactin (microlactin), and even high quality omega fatty acids and herbs.

A good examination and discussion about pain relief is essential. To be well informed and knowledgeable is the only way to keep your pet both safe and comfortable.