

CANE TOAD TOXICITY

Cane toad poisoning usually occurs via a dog's mucous membranes - most commonly the gums but also the eyes, nose and tongue. The poison is absorbed via the mucous membranes into the bloodstream. It then targets the heart, gastrointestinal tract and nervous system. Toads release a fast-acting toxin when threatened and remain poisonous even after death until fully decomposed*.

Signs and symptoms of cane toad poisoning

If you suspect your greyhound has encountered a toad, the first priority is to remove the toxin from their gums by following the below steps:

- Use a damp cloth/towel to wipe the gums, tongue and roof of mouth.
- Wash the cloth thoroughly between wipes.
- Continue this process for 10-20 minutes until the slimy coating is removed

NEVER USE A HOSE TO FLUSH THE TOXIN FROM THEIR MOUTH.

In mild cases, the above first aid steps will be all that is needed, however the survival rate for cane toad poisoning decreases the longer you wait so veterinary attention is always recommended after the toxin is removed.

Symptoms to look out for:

- Drooling or foaming at the mouth
- Red and slimy gums
- Pawing at the mouth
- Vomiting
- Disorientation
- Dilated pupils
- Increased heart rate
- Panting or difficulty breathing
- Wobbly gait or loss of coordination
- Muscle twitches and tremors
- Part of body (legs) or whole body going rigid
- Seizures
- High body temperature



* Current as of May 2025