**Tips for dealing with Poisoning**

The common poisons that are encountered in Jamaica are:

1. **Gramoxone (Paraquat) - Weedicide**2. **Insecticides**  
3. **Toads - only a special breed (Bufo marinus)**  
4. **Rat poison**

**Gramoxone Poisoning**  
  
Gramoxone is a herbicide that is most often encountered with malicious poisonings in dogs. Scores of dogs have been poisoned by eating poison-laced meat while wandering their neigborhoods.   
  
The chemical creates intense gastrointestinal upset quickly after ingestion occurs.   
After 1-2 weeks animals begin showing signs of respiratory distress and eventually die from the damage done to the lungs. If the poisoning is caught quickly activated charcoal can be administered to prevent and slow absorption. Unfortunately the prognosis for this type of poisoning is poor.  
  
The best prevention is keeping your pet confined on your property.

**Insecticides**  
There are many insecticides used in households. Many are used as aerosols such as Pyro and Baygon or as baits that are used in gardens. Common signs seen with this kind of poisoning are: vomiting, inappetence and increased salivation. Unlike Gramoxone, there is an antidote that can be given if affected animals are seen as soon after ingestion as possible. If the poison is in bait form, owners can induce vomiting by giving a tablespoonful of hydrogen peroxide orally for large dogs and a teaspoonful for small dogs and puppies.

**Toad Poisoning**  
  
Bufo marinus is a poisonous toad. This toad can excrete a thick, irritating venom that can cause extreme irritation in the mouths of animals. The poison glands are on the back of the neck of toads. Dogs contact the poison when they bite or lick the back of the toad. The most common clinical signs are retching, vomiting, pawing at the mouth, and hypersalivation.   
  
When a large amount of venom is absorbed an animal can go into convulsions and have cardiac arrhythmia's. If you suspect recent exposure, flush your dog's mouth with water from a garden hose. Therapy for intoxication is mainly supportive and limiting further absorption of the venom. Such as giving activated charcoal. If severe signs are seen, treat this condition as an emergency and call immediately.

**Rat Poison**  
  
The first thing to do when u have suspected that your pet has consumed rat poison is to induce vomiting using hydrogen peroxide orally at 1 tablespoon for large dogs and a teaspoon for puppies / small dogs. The pet should be rushed to a clinic so that the antidote, vitamin K1 can be given. Signs of rat poisoning include: bleeding from the gums, rectum and blood in the urine.

**Source of information:   
  
Vet4pets Medical Centre, Jamaica**