



Vets warn popular Mother's Day gifts could be fatal for cats

Britons are expected to splash out in excess of £600 million on Mother's Day presents this year.

The most popular gift is set to be flowers, but some well-liked bouquets can be extremely poisonous to cats, causing vomiting, diarrhoea, and even kidney failure if swallowed.

Hundreds of cats have been admitted to the UK's leading pet emergency provider, Vets Now's, out-of-hours clinics and 24/7 pet emergency hospitals as a result of coming into contact with lilies. Vets Now treats around three cats a week for lily toxicity alone and there is often a rise in cases around Valentine's Day, Easter and Mother's Day.

Drinking water from a vase containing lilies could even be enough to kill a cat, vets have warned.

Dr Laura Playforth, Vets Now's head of veterinary standards, said: "We see a big rise in pet emergency cases during public holidays and often it's due to cats eating things they shouldn't such as lilies and chocolate.

"Lilies are particularly poisonous to cats. They can cause severe diarrhoea, convulsions, acute kidney failure and even death.

"What makes them particularly dangerous is that all parts of the plant are toxic and even small ingestions, such as two or three leaves or petals, or water from a vase containing lilies, can be potentially fatal.

"In fact, even very small amounts of pollen can be extremely dangerous. Cats can swallow a toxic amount just by grooming after brushing against the flowers.

Dr Playforth continues: "Lilies are so dangerous we'd call on cat owners never to have them in their house."

How to keep our feline friends safe this Mother's Day

Here, the UK's leading pet emergency provider, [Vets Now](#), has compiled a list of the flowers that are poisonous to cats. Different kinds of flowers have different effects so, if your mum is a cat owner, make sure you avoid giving them any of those mentioned below this Mother's Day.

Note to media: these tips can be attributed to Dr Laura Playforth, Vets Now's head of veterinary standards, an authority in emergency and critical care in pets.

1. Lilies

Certain types of lily — those from the *Lilium* or *Hemerocallis* species — are very, very dangerous for cats. These include Asiatic, Day, Easter, Japanese Show and Tiger lilies. All of these flowers contain highly toxic substances and eating just two or three leaves, or even drinking water from a vase containing them can be potentially fatal. In fact, cats have even been known to suffer kidney failure after ingesting lily pollen.



If you ever suspect your cat has eaten, or even licked, a lily seek urgent veterinary advice. Treatment is likely to include induced vomiting and intravenous fluid therapy. Your cat may also be given activated charcoal, which is sometimes used as a form of gastrointestinal decontamination for poisoned pets. If left untreated, however, lily poisoning can cause long-lasting kidney damage and potentially even death. The moral of the story is — while there are some harmless lilies out there — never, ever buy a cat owner lilies unless you know they're safe.

Read [Millie's story](#) on the Vets Now website to find out more.

2. Amaryllis

Amaryllis aren't just a popular gift, they're also a poisonous one. The stalks, flowers and bulbs contain phenanthridine alkaloids which are toxic to cats. The highest proportion is in the bulbs, although cats would rarely eat bulbs. Eating amaryllis can cause vomiting, changes in blood pressure, tremors and seizures.

3. Daffodils

These popular yellow flowers contain a poisonous alkaloid that can trigger vomiting while crystals in the bulbs are severely toxic and can cause serious conditions such as cardiac arrhythmias or respiratory depression.

4. Tulips

Behind the rose, the tulip is the country's most popular cut flower. But, like daffodils, the bulbs of tulips are toxic to cats. They contain allergenic lactones which, if swallowed, can lead to vomiting, diarrhoea and depression.

5. Chrysanthemums

Although only mildly toxic, chrysanthemums contain pyrethrins, which are used in dog flea and tick medications, and are particularly poisonous to cats. If your cat has eaten chrysanthemums look out for vomiting, diarrhoea and lack of appetite and seek advice from your vet.

6. Hyacinths

Belonging to the liliaceae family, the highest concentration of poison in hyacinths is in the bulbs. Eating a hyacinth bulb can lead to drooling, vomiting, or diarrhoea, depending on the number consumed.

7. Iris and gladioli

Are gladioli poisonous to cats is one of the most commonly asked questions on our website. Both of these flowers belong to the Iridaceae family and can cause irritation when eaten. Like many popular spring flowers, the most toxic part is the bulb.

8. Cyclamen

A popular houseplant that's prevalent in Mediterranean countries, cyclamen contains irritating saponins. Eating the plant can lead to sickness and diarrhoea and potentially even heart failure if ingested in large enough quantities.

9. Widow's thrill

Kalanchoe, or widow's thrill, is toxic to cats and may cause them to experience vomiting and diarrhoea. The toxins in kalanchoe have also been known to cause abnormal heart rhythms.



10. Foxglove

Foxglove, while very beautiful with its trumpet like blossoms, are very poisonous to dogs, cats, and even human.! Foxglove contains naturally-occurring poisons that affect the heart.

If you think your pet may have eaten any of these please contact your vet immediately or, out of hours, find your nearest Vets Now pet emergency clinic or 24/7 hospital. www.vets-now.com

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For media enquires contact Gail Chalmers on gail@gailchalmers.com or 07919411402

Vets Now notes to editor:

- Vets Now was established in 2001 and is the leading provider of emergency veterinary care for small animals in the UK.
- With 24/7 Pet Emergency Hospitals in Glasgow, Manchester and Swindon, and 59 out-of-hours clinics nationwide, Vets Now is committed to delivering a responsive emergency and critical care service for cats, dogs and other small animals.
- Vets Now also partners with more than 1,400 veterinary practices across the UK to provide their clients with a seamless out-of-hours emergency care service.
- Vets Now employs over 1000 staff.
- Vets Now remains at the forefront of emergency veterinary care through its commitment to clinical excellence and training, employing many of the country's top Emergency & Critical Care Specialists.