



First Aid<sup>+</sup>

1080 and your dog



Pest Animal Control CRC

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## 1080 and your dog

This pamphlet has been designed as a guideline to provide basic first aid information for suspected 1080 poisoning of dogs.



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# 1080 and your dog

- Compound 1080 is a pesticide used to control a range of pest animals in Australia.
- It is a highly toxic pesticide, but it is particularly toxic to introduced pest species.
- While steps can be taken to reduce risks in areas where 1080 is being used, domestic dogs are potentially at risk of poisoning because, like all introduced carnivores, they are very susceptible to 1080.
- Knowing what signs to look for and what action to take may improve your dog's chance of survival if poisoning does occur.
- Once signs of poisoning are apparent, the prognosis even with treatment is poor and many dogs die.

The best way to prevent dogs from being poisoned is by ensuring they are kept safely away from any source of the poison.

## Signs to watch for include:

- anxiety
- uncontrolled urinating and defecating
- frenzied behaviour
- convulsions
- hypersensitivity
- fitting and seizures
- failure to respond to owner
- difficulty breathing
- vomiting
- coma



*A well fitted muzzle is money well spent and widely used in some states.*

## Preventative measures

In all situations involving 1080 use, prevention of poisoning is better than cure. Therefore it is essential to keep dogs away from areas where they have access to the poison.

- The use of dog muzzles is the best means of preventing dogs from being poisoned. This will prevent them from scavenging carcasses, baits or toxic vomit.
- Baits are required to be kept in secure containers well away from food-stuffs, children and dogs.
- Dogs should be kennelled in pens or tethered in runs when not working.
- Supervision of dogs when off the lead will mean immediate action can be taken if a dog is seen to take a bait, carcase or vomit.
- Tell your neighbours when, where and for how long you are baiting on your property, and erect proper signs that provide information that baiting is occurring on your property.
- Always follow the Directions for Use on the label, which may require
  - baits to be buried to prevent movement by birds,
  - bait sites to be marked for easy recovery of uneaten baits, and
  - the collection and destruction by burning or deep burial (at least 1m) of all baits after a stipulated time.
- Make sure you have suitable emetics, telephone numbers for local vets and this first aid information in a readily accessible area to improve your dog's chance of survival if poisoning does occur.

**NOTE: Never assume that after time baits will no longer be toxic to dogs, even if there has been substantial rain on them.**



1080 in solution is incorporated into dried, fresh or processed meat baits for fox, wild dog or pig control.

## What is 1080, and how does it work?

Compound 1080 (sodium fluoroacetate), also known as sodium monofluoroacetate, fluoroacetate or “ten eighty”, is a white water-soluble powder that is tasteless to most species. It is a highly toxic and effective pesticide used to control pest animals. While the commercial product is synthetically manufactured, fluoroacetate occurs naturally in a variety of plants in Australia (*Acacia georginae*, and *Gastrolobium spp*) and has been known to poison stock consuming these plants.

Many birds, rodents, ruminants and other native animals such as reptiles and amphibians are more tolerant of 1080 than most introduced pest species. This allows baiting programs to be targeted at pest species with reduced risks to native species.

On consumption, 1080 is rapidly absorbed out of the gut into the bloodstream. Once it is in an animal’s circulation, it blocks enzymes that produce energy in cells. Over a period of time, this lack of cell energy prevents organs from maintaining vital body functions.

The use of 1080 is tightly regulated by government agencies to protect human health and safety and minimise unintentional poisoning of non-target animals such as wildlife and pets.



## What is the risk for my working dog?

On properties where 1080 baiting campaigns are carried out, working and pet dogs are at risk of accidental poisoning if they eat:

- baits,
- dead or dying poisoned animals, or
- toxic vomit.

Be aware that accidental poisonings can also occur in areas adjacent to those baited, as foxes and some other animals are known to excavate, carry and cache baits. In addition, poisoned animals can move some distance after taking a bait because there is a time-lag, usually of some hours, before signs of poisoning are seen.

# Signs of poisoning

## How can I tell if my dog has been poisoned?

The time-lag between ingestion and appearance of clinical signs may be a reflection of the dose received, and can range from 3 to 20 hours. Signs observed are the result of nervous and respiratory system dysfunction and include;

- frenzied behaviour such as running and howling
- hypersensitivity to sound and light
- failure to respond to owner
- vomiting
- urinating and defecating uncontrollably

If early action is not taken, signs progress to;

- convulsions (seizures / fitting)
- difficulty breathing
- respiratory failure
- coma
- death

The effects of 1080 on the brain of the dog are claimed to be similar to those associated with epileptic fits in humans where a severe lack of muscular control is not accompanied by a perception of pain. It is also believed that convulsions begin after the dog becomes unconscious.



# First aid for 1080 poisoning in dogs

## What can I do if I suspect my dog is poisoned?

If you see your dog eating a bait, a poisoned animal or toxic vomit, or you suspect it may have done so, **immediate action is needed** and it is **essential not to wait** until obvious signs of poisoning appear.

### Take the dog to the nearest vet without delay!

If you know there will be a reasonable delay in getting your dog to the vet, or that a vet visit is not possible, you might try to induce vomiting. Be aware that it is not easy for an untrained person to make a dog vomit.

If you decide to induce vomiting it needs to be done as early as possible after ingestion of the poison. Considerable care must be taken when inducing vomiting as:

- Your dog may be hypersensitive and may react violently,
- You may administer the emetic into the dog's lungs causing it to asphyxiate,
- Excess administration of some emetics may make the dog critically ill, and
- If you successfully induce vomiting, the toxic vomit can poison other dogs or pets if not cleaned up as soon as possible.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Even if you succeed in inducing vomiting, still seek immediate veterinary attention if possible as some poison could have been absorbed and the dog may well not be out of danger.



*These household items may be used to induce vomiting in dogs and pets.*

## What can I use to make my dog vomit?

An emetic should be kept in an accessible place (eg glove-box of the ute) in case of poisoning. Suitable emetics include;

- Table salt (2 teaspoons of salt in a cup of water – use less for a small dog and more for large breeds)
- Washing soda crystals (sodium carbonate) 3 - 5 crystals orally. Do not use laundry detergents or powders.
- Copper sulphate crystals, i.e. 2 about the size of peas.

**If you are not having success in inducing vomiting, seek immediate veterinary attention rather than wasting time by repeated attempts.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Bury vomit in a deep hole (1m) to ensure that other dogs and animals do not have access to it as it can poison them.**



*Keep your dog quiet and securely restrained during transport to prevent it hurting itself or others and to slow the rate of energy use.*

## What else should I do?

- Call your nearest veterinary clinic to allow them time to prepare for your arrival.
- If your dog is showing signs of poisoning, protect it from injuring itself or others by wrapping it tightly in a blanket or bag, or putting it in a box.
- If it is convulsing (seizure/fitting), keep fingers clear of its mouth – it will not swallow its tongue.
- Due to the nature of the poison and its interference with energy production, it is very important to keep the dog as quiet and cool as possible to reduce energy demands. If it is hot, spray the dog or the blanket with water and provide a good airflow over the dog to keep it cool.

## Information to tell your vet over the phone, and what to take to the vet hospital

To ensure that your dog receives the most efficient treatment once you get to the vet hospital, information you should provide over the phone should include;

- The suspected substance.
- How long ago the exposure occurred.
- Mode of exposure ie. bait, carcass, unknown?
- How the dog is acting now (clinical signs).
- Duration of clinical signs.

Take a sample of the suspected poisoned material with you to the vet.

**NOTE: Do not handle baits, poisoned carcasses, or vomit directly. Use gloves and place such items in sealed plastic bags. Properly dispose of or secure any remaining bait or poisoned carcass to minimise risk of other accidental poisonings.**



## What will the vet do?

The principles of treatment your vet will employ are to;

- obtain a full history
- evaluate the patient
- stabilise vital functions
- try to prevent further absorption of toxin
- hasten elimination of absorbed toxin
- maintain supportive care during recovery

## Prognosis and post treatment care

Compound 1080 has no specific antidote. There are however veterinary treatments that can assist in your dog's survival. The sooner action is taken following poisoning or suspected poisoning, the better the prognosis. However, once signs of poisoning are apparent, the prognosis even with treatment is poor, although this does depend on the amount of 1080 ingested, the size of the dog and the severity of signs.

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## 1080 and your dog Emergency contact numbers

Vet's name:

Address:

Phone:

Mobile:

After hours:

Notes:

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