

HEALTH ALERT

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August 5, 2009. DO NOT GIVE YOUR DOG ANY PET-TABS. THEY ARE CONTAMINATED WITH LEAD AND HAVE BEEN FOR YEARS!

I cannot emphasize enough the extreme danger these multivitamins represent. Quixotically, they are not being recalled and the FDA has taken no notice of the results of testing published by ConsumerLabs.com

This from the ConsumerLab's paid subscription web site:

Pet-Tabs Complete Daily for Dogs was contaminated with 6.45 mcg of lead per tablet. This is several times higher than the amount of lead (1 .41 mcg) ConsumerLab.com found to be in this product in 2007. Contaminations levels for dogs are not well defined, but FDA notes that children should not be exposed to more than 6 mcg of lead per day and, as noted above, California requires warning labels on supplements for human use that contain over 0.5 mcg of lead per day.

Dr. Russell continues:

Pet-Tabs are perhaps the most widely sold dog and cat vitamin supplement. We've used them (albeit not for many years). Pet-Tabs are sold by PetsMart, Doctors Foster and Smith, and virtually every pet shop, and on-line pet store in the nation. Pet-Tabs are made by the giant Pfizer Pharmaceutical

Corporation, one of America's leading opponents of health care reform and industry inspection and regulation. Pet-Tabs are sold under another corporate name:

"Virbac" <<

<http://www.virbacpets.com/>>>

ConsumerLab tests mostly human products. Sadly, this report and the previous years' report confirming lead contamination in Pfizer/Virbac Pet-Tab supplements calls into serious question the safety and efficacy of these giant corporations' entire product lines. ConsumerLab tests mostly human products. There is no other information (such as why or how this supposed animal health care product has been laced with toxic levels of lead for years).

LEAD POISONING

Lead can be absorbed through the skin or, in the case of these supplements, ingested and absorbed. Clinical signs can be gastrointestinal and/or neurological. Many dogs or cats that are chronically ill, have upset stomachs, anorexia (food avoiders), blood disorders, kidney disorders (degeneration of the glomeruli and tubules), immunological problems, reproductive problems, or are suffering abnormal behavioral signs could have suffered chronic, atastrophic lead poisoning through supplements.

Before this revelation of supplement poisoning, the most common known cause of lead poisoning in people and dogs was contact with lead based paint or old car batteries. Other common causes of lead poisoning include ingestion of lead shot (fatal to many wild birds and sometimes served up in food that is hunted) and handling lead painted toys and ceramic ware. During the past 6,000 years humans have mined and redistributed lead on the planet to the extent that each of us has approximately 1,000 times the

lead in our system (as measured in our bones) than prehistoric North American Indians.

Puppies absorb lead more readily than adults and are at greatest immediate risk for signs of lead poisoning, but lead poisoning can prove debilitating, even fatal for mature pets as well. If your dog suffers from the diffuse signs of lead poisoning or if your dog or cat has been exposed to Pet-Tabs, the CTCA recommends you have its blood tested for lead concentration. Children in the household should also be tested should your pet prove contaminated.

CTCA RECOMMENDATIONS

I would avoid all vitamin and mineral supplement products sold under labels by either Pfizer or Virbac. These include labels such as "Pet-Tinic," and "Lixotinic," and "Liqui-Tinic," which are generally sold for large animals. Save any bottles of these products in a sealed Zip Loc bag. Label the bag well, stating "DO NOT USE - POISON!" You may need a sample of this product should your dog or cat become symptomatic. You will need to save the original packaging and product should Pfizer/Virbac be subject to a Class Action suit.

REFERENCES FOR VETS

Veterinarians normally do not first associate gastrointestinal, immunological or even neurological signs with lead poisoning. Given America's current largely untested, unregulated food, supplement, and pharmaceutical supply, perhaps they should. Should your vet need additional information about lead toxicity, its diagnosis and treatment, I suggest the following available, up-to-date references:

Michael E. Peterson, Patricia A. Talcott (editors), "Small Animal Toxicology, Second Edition," Saunders Elsevier, St. Louis, MO. 2006

Ramesh G. Gupta (editor) "Veterinary Toxicology: Basic and Clinical Principles," Academic Press, New York, NY. 2007.

WHAT VITAMIN SUPPLEMENTS ARE SAFE? That question is analogous to asking: "what food is safe?" It's a crap shoot to be sure. ConsumerLab tested only three pet supplements; one was "Halo Purely for Pets VitaGlo Daily Greens." It did not contain lead, but it contained less than half its advertised vitamins. "21st Century Pet Nutrition Pet Chews Plus" was "approved" since it did not contain lead and its ingredients were as labeled.

Our veterinarian believes that one-half a Centrum Senior (human vitamin) is safe and effective for a dog the size of a Coton de Tulear. But without widespread government tests of our food, drug and supplement \supply, who knows?

We have been using ProPet 8-in-one Vitamin supplements without problems, but chronic, gradual poisoning is not something we'd necessarily see. As noted: it is a gamble. And one that no one in this country should have to take.

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