



Crow River  
Animal Hospital  
& Dental Clinic

Friday Fun Facts – Number 33:2010

**Melissa Shelton DVM – Grape Juice, Grape Toxicity, and Natural Products**

Disclaimer: All of the information provided here is intended for educational purposes. The information is not intended to diagnose, treat, or prescribe for any illness. Please seek the advice of a qualified health care professional in your area of concern if you or your pets have a health challenge.



Around 2001, a series of toxic events were recognized with dogs eating raisins or grapes. Generally, these were pretty large amounts of grapes or raisins being consumed. Levels reported as toxic are 0.7 ounces of grapes per kilogram of body weight, or 0.11 ounces of raisins per kilogram. For a 25 pound dog – this would mean consuming  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound of grapes or 1.21 ounces of raisins. Obviously, raisins are where a little dog could get into trouble. In a little mini-snack box of

raisins, there is about ½ of an ounce of raisins – so 2 ½ boxes could be toxic to a 25 pound dog. These amounts are the LOWEST recorded amounts that have caused a pet a problem. The difficulty in this issue is that there are certainly pets that have had to consume a lot more to create a problem, and there could be some that consume less and develop a problem. This area is still controversial, as there are dogs who have consumed larger amounts as well, with absolutely no problems.



We still don't know the exact cause of the toxicity. Thoughts have focused on fungal, pesticide and heavy-metal contaminations of the grapes or raisins – although these appear to have been ruled out at this time. The toxic component seems to be water-soluble, and within the flesh of the grape or raisin itself, and not the seed. So using Grapeseed Oil seems to be fine when pets are concerned.



### What about Grape Juice?

There have not been reported cases of toxicity due to grape juice or grape seed extract. It is unknown if there is a certain aspect of processing that renders grape juice non-toxic or not. Toxicity has been linked with seedless grapes, and apparently not with seeded varieties. One has to wonder if the genetic modifications involved in creating seedless grapes have a role in the toxicity. There are some vets that still recommend avoiding grape juice as a precaution.



### Is this just a dog "thing"?

There may be one case of a cat having renal failure after eating 1 cup of raisins, however most cats will not eat these items. There have been no known cases in birds or other animals who consume grapes. Certainly, there are many animals that have eaten much larger volumes of grapes or raisins without incident. At this time, it appears that not every dog (or cat) are susceptible to the toxic events associated with grapes or raisins. The risk factors for which animal will be susceptible is unknown at this time as well.



What are the symptoms of grape toxicity? Acute Renal Failure. Basically, your pet's kidneys stop working. There can be varying degrees of symptoms shown; basic illness, urinating a large volume, not urinating, drinking a lot of water, not eating, vomiting, etc... Basically if your pet is not well, it should be examined by

a veterinarian and blood work and a urinalysis performed. If there are kidney value alterations and your pet has a history of ingesting grapes or raisins, then this toxicity would be a concern for you.

*What do you do if your dog or cat eats a lot of grapes or raisins?* Consult a vet, have them vomit, and have activated charcoal administered. This is the best advice at this time. Treatment with large amounts of intravenous fluids is very important, as well as monitoring kidney values. I would also add Helichrysum Essential Oil, Sulfurzyme, and K&B Tincture orally to their detoxification regimen, as it will help to support kidney function as well as works to clear toxins and poisons. My own dogs have eaten several grapes while the kids are eating them, and I do not get worried. I will even purposely let my dogs eat a grape off the floor or toss them one as a quick treat. But, they are larger dogs, and it is certainly not a common occurrence.

*What about natural products that contain grape juice?* This has been a common question lately. I consulted online to see what other holistic vets were also recommending to their clients. There are plenty of natural health products that are used routinely for holistic animal care, that contain grape juice. NingXia Red from Young Living and Tahitian Noni Juice being two of the most common. My dogs and cats have received both of these products routinely, and I swear by them. I found that most other holistic vets were still using these types of products as well, without concern. Since I know that there are literally thousands and thousands of people using these products daily in their animals, I really have no concern about it.



For me, the benefits of these super juices far out weigh any risk that the grape juice may contain. I truly feel that the sheer number of people using these products in their pets has proven the safety of these products. I have no qualms giving or recommending NingXia Red or Tahitian Noni Juice for my patients.

Please remember – that I only recommend the use of Young Living Essential Oils for your human family and your animal family. With this recommendation, I am certain that you will have safe and powerful oils, with consistent results. I never have to guess at the quality of the oil that you have... If they are Young Living Oils, I know that they are medical grade, and I don't even have to question it.

Feel free to contact our office or visit our website for more information on how you can use holistic care for your furry, feathered or finned family.

Consultations are available by email and phone to help you to care for the animals in your life naturally, even if you are far away, and not able to come to our “physical location”.

*“Mother Nature gave us the gift of healing. Providing our bodies with the nutrients, substances, and care required to heal, lies in our own actions.”*



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