

First aid for working dogs and other domestic animals

Although this advice is primarily for working dogs poisoned by 1080, the treatment for all domestic animals is the same. This advice is also applicable to poisoning by pindone, but the veterinary treatment will differ with the type of poison.

What are the risks of poisoning working dogs?

Wherever 1080 baiting is taking place, there is always a risk of accidental poisoning. Dogs may suffer accidental poisoning by eating baits, picking up baits that have been moved or relocated by other animals such as foxes, or eating dead animals that have been poisoned by 1080 baits.

Accidental poisoning can occur in the paddock or area being treated or in areas adjacent to the baited paddock, particularly if an animal or bird has moved or vomited up some 1080 bait.

How do I know my dog has been poisoned?

Dogs seen eating bait material or suspected of picking up bait material should be taken to a veterinarian as quickly as possible.

The time it takes for 1080 to work may be as little as 30 minutes to 2 hours before symptoms occur, depending on the dose. It is best to take action immediately rather than wait for the symptoms to appear. Quite often, once symptoms are evident it may be too late to save the animal.

Get to a vet ASAP

Signs to watch for are:

- anxiety
- frenzied behaviour such as running or howling
- hypersensitivity to sound or light
- failure to respond to owner
- vomiting
- urinating and defecating inappropriately.

And eventually:

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

Inducing vomiting

Extreme care should be taken when inducing vomiting, as the dog may react violently and expose toxic vomit, which can cause secondary poisoning of other domestic animals.

You should induce vomiting when:

- you have seen your dog eat a bait or a poisoned carcass
- there is a likely delay before veterinary assistance is available.

Just because the dog has vomited does not mean all the poison is out of the stomach. Still seek veterinary attention.

What can I use?

- table salt (1 to 3 tablespoons orally)
- salty water
- dilute mustard and water.

When using 1080 it is advisable to have a small plastic drink bottle with 30 to 50 g of salt and 250 mL water handy at all times.

Ensure no other animal has access to the vomit, as they will be poisoned as well.

What else can I do?

- Call your local veterinary clinic and advise you are bringing in the animal.
- Wrap the dog in a blanket or put in a box to restrict movement and prevent it from injuring itself.
- If the dog is convulsing or fitting, keep your fingers clear of its mouth; it will not swallow its tongue.
- Keeping the dog cool by spraying lightly with water or giving a good flow of air may help.

Muzzle your dogs or keep them chained up while ever baits are likely to be active.

Reference: *First Aid – 1080 and your dog* 2004 by Australian Wool Innovation Limited.