

Foods Which are Dangerous To Your Birds

Although we all try very hard to provide the best nutrition for our birds, there are times when they may get into something they shouldn't have. We may even have children, grand children or well-meaning adults feed them something because they don't know it is dangerous. Please be aware that the items listed here should be avoided.

Alcoholic Beverages – Avoid completely! Consumption can lead to brain damage and death. Inhalation of ethanol should also be avoided as this can also cause intoxication and death.

Avocado – Avoid Completely! Consumption is known to have caused death within hours.

Rhubarb Leaves – Avoid Completely! Consumption will cause death.

Caffeine – Includes caffeinated beverages, coffee grounds, and tea bags or iced tea crystals. They must love the smell of coffee. I once had an African Gray try to take a travel mug away from me. He almost succeeded. See symptoms and treatment below under chocolate.

Chocolate – Avoid Completely! Consumption of small quantities can cause rapid onset of hyperactivity, vomiting, diarrhea, heartbeat irregularities, seizures, and death. The active ingredients causing problems are theophylline and caffeine, the higher the concentration in the chocolate, the more rapid the progression. Usually, the less sugar present in the chocolate the higher the concentration of toxic active ingredients. If you suspect your bird has ingested chocolate, administer 1 cc. of Pepto Bismol and rush your bird to your avian veterinarian.

Fat – Avoid feeding high fat foods. Excess fat over time can cause fatty liver disease, obesity, diarrhea and oily feather texture. Excess fat in the diet can also interfere with the absorption of other nutrients. Some birds are more easily affected by fat than others. Younger birds may require a little more.

Salt – Consumption can cause excess drinking and urinating, depression, neurologic hyperactivity, tremors, and death. When necropsied, birds with excessive consumption of salt have a great deal of fluid buildup in the brain and are hemorrhaging. **Remember-A bird eating one potato chip with salt is comparable to our eating 50 chips.**