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The house is full of potential hazards for both humans and animals but with a little forward thinking and awareness, the most common causes of injury mean that many accidents can be avoided.

**Carbon Monoxide** - just like humans, pets are vulnerable to carbon monoxide poisoning which is why we should ensure fuel-fired heaters are correctly maintained. This is particularly relevant if your dog sleeps next to the boiler or any other area where carbon monoxide may be present. If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, remove the patient to fresh air immediately and contact your vet (symptoms include drowsiness, lethargy and weakness). You can purchase carbon monoxide detectors cheaply in most hardware stores.

**Chemicals** - cleaning products often contain highly toxic chemicals so it's important to ensure that these are kept safely shut away from your pet.

**Electrical Cords** - The risk of electrocution or oral burns from electrical cords is particularly relevant for puppies and kittens that have chewing tendencies so young pets should be monitored carefully and exposure to electric cords minimised.

**Medicines** - only ever give your pet medicines that have been prescribed by the vet as painkillers such as ibuprofen and paracetamol are particularly dangerous to our animal companions. In addition vitamin and mineral supplements can also be dangerous so ensure these are kept out of your pet's reach.

**Prescribed Medicines** - if your pet has been prescribed medicine by the vet ensure you follow the instructions on the packaging carefully and if you aren't sure, better to be on the safe side and call your vet to double check. If the medicine has been designed to be 'palatable' it is important to make sure that these are stored away from your pet as they may prove to be all too enticing!

**Batteries** - if swallowed, batteries can be extremely dangerous so keep these out of reach of your pet.

**Coins** - *all* coins should be kept away from your pet particularly pennies as they are made with zinc which is toxic to animals if ingested.

**Pine-Oil Cleaners** - the phenol that is used in these cleaners can cause serious liver damage to cats. All it takes is for your cat to lick the wet oil from their paws so avoid the risk by scrubbing your floor with something else.

**Plastic Bags** – these pose a danger of choking or suffocation to your pet so ensure plastic bags are kept out of your pet's reach

**Paper Shredder** - to reduce the risks posed by shredders only operate a shredder when your pet is not present, don't use a shredder to shred food wrappers and if possible opt for a shredder with a protective bar or cover to minimise the potential danger

