

# Keeping Your Pets Safe Around Cane Toads



Invasive cane toads (*Rhinella marina*) are a nonnative species that can be deadly to curious pets.

## A Poisonous Problem

If your pet bites or swallows a cane toad, they can become sick and die in as little as 15 minutes without proper treatment. These toads release a milky toxin that sticks in your pet's mouth. Symptoms may include frantic or disoriented behavior, brick red gums, seizures, and foaming at the mouth.

## Treatment

1. Wash toxins forward out of mouth using a hose for 10 minutes being careful not to direct water down the throat.
2. Wipe gums/tongue with dish towel to remove toxins.
3. Get your pet to the vet!

## Prevention: Better than Treatment

Most encounters happen in backyards. These practices can help keep your pet safer.

**Mow & Trim:** Keep grass short so you can spot cane toads. Bring underside of shrubs off the ground to eliminate hiding places for these toxic toads.

**Clean:** Mess attracts pests. Outdoor food and water bowls for pets, brush piles, and other clutter can attract toads – and their prey, which in turn attracts toads.

**Watch:** Since cane toads are nocturnal, watch your pets while outside at night when most encounters happen. Don't allow your pets to nose around in bushes while on walks.

[www.floridainvasives.org/southwest](http://www.floridainvasives.org/southwest)

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