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BITREX

Recently, I was presented with an emergency: a patient who was having seizures that were refractory to my treatment. I suspected some form of toxicity.

We weren't sure at the time, but after questioning the owner, she informed me that she had put slug bait in her garden to control snails and slugs. The chemical name is metaldehyde and is extremely toxic to pets and people. It causes relentless seizures and takes about 2 days to remedy, if in fact it doesn't result in death. Often, it does result in death.

I asked my client if she was aware of the fact that it was very toxic substance. She replied yes, however she was advised by the store owner that it contained "Bitrex" to deter pets from eating it. Obviously, Bitrex does not live to meet its potential.

Later, I investigated other common toxins. Those being warfarin or other generation derivatives such as bromodiolone, and ethylene glycol (antifreeze) and found that they are available with "Bitrex" as an additive to deter children and pets from ingestion.

My advice to my readers, based on my recent experience, is that if you have pets or children, refrain from using any of these products with or without Bitrex.

If I recall, as a child, I was a very intense nail biter. I remember my mother painting something bitter on my nails to deter me from doing that. In hindsight, that was probably "Bitrex". and I assure you, it did not deter me.