

Leave the Chocolate Out of Rover's Celebrations

Holidays and chocolate seem to go together. For birthdays, Valentines Day, Halloween and New Year -- chocolate is everywhere. But, there is one place chocolate should never be and that's in your dog. Chocolate is toxic to dogs and it can kill them!

Here are the facts:

Chocolate contains theobromine, a compound in the same family as caffeine, and theophylline (an asthma drug). In certain quantities, theobromine is toxic to dogs. In general, the minimum toxic theobromine dose in dogs ranges from 46 to 68 mg/lb. Half the dogs that consume 114 to 228 mg/lb or greater of theobromine will die. Lots of things can play a role in whether your dog will have a toxic reaction including the amount of chocolate your dog ate, your dog's size, and whether your dog happens to be extra-sensitive to theobromine. One of the most important things in chocolate toxicity is the kind of chocolate your dog ate. For instance:

Milk chocolate contains 44 mg of theobromine per oz. (704 mg theobromine/lb milk chocolate)
Semisweet chocolate chips contains 150mg/oz. (2400 mg theobromine/lb semisweet chocolate)
Baking chocolate contains 390mg/oz. (6240 mg theobromine/lb baking chocolate)

Do the math:

For example, Hyperactive Harley the Boston Terrier is eyeing the ears and tail from a chocolate Easter bunny. How much would he have eat to get a 46 mg/lb dose of theobromine? Well, he'd have to eat:

1 ounce per 3 pounds of body weight of semisweet chocolate bunny,
1 ounce per 1 pound of body weight of milk chocolate bunny, or
1 ounce per 9 pounds of body weight of baking chocolate bunny.

Signs of chocolate toxicity:

Theobromine toxicity can cause a variety of signs ranging from mild to severe. Signs include:

Vomiting

Diarrhea

Rapid heart rate

Restlessness

Hyperactivity

Urinating more

Muscle spasms

Seizures

Other neurological signs



If you think your dog has eaten chocolate call your Veterinarian immediately! Only your vet can determine the proper treatment for your pet.