



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CHOCOLATE TOXICITY

Theobromine is the component of chocolate that causes trouble for our pets. Its effects on the body include:

- Central Nervous System (CNS) stimulation
- Cardiovascular stimulation
- Increased blood pressure (mild)
- Nausea and vomiting

Signs of toxicity depend on the amount ingested. They are most commonly seen 12 hours or less after chocolate ingestion and include:

- Excitement / nervousness / trembling
- Vomiting / diarrhea
- Excessive thirst and/or urination
- Muscle spasms
- Seizures
- Coma
- Death -- likely due to heart rhythm abnormalities

As little as 1 oz of milk chocolate per pound of pet can be lethal!

The toxicity is even greater for other types of chocolate, as seen at right.

Theobromine Content of Typical Chocolate Products	mg/oz.
Dry cocoa powder	737
Cocoa beans	600
Baker's (unsweetened) chocolate	393
Cocoa bean hulls (garden mulch)	255
Semi-sweet chocolate chips	138
Instant cocoa powder	136
Dark, sweet chocolate	130
Milk chocolate	58
White chocolate	0.25

The bottom line is that your pet is much safer avoiding chocolate altogether. Keep your candy locked in the cupboard to keep your pet out of harm's way.

If, despite your best efforts, your pet does ingest more than a crumb of chocolate, call our office immediately so steps can be taken to minimize the danger of toxicity.