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Veterinary Specialists

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# Chocolate Toxicity



Chocolate contains the compounds methylxanthine, theobromine, and caffeine, all of which can be toxic to dogs, if ingested in certain doses. Milk chocolate and semi-sweet chocolate contain less of these toxic compounds than dark chocolate, but can still be harmful. If your pet has eaten any form of chocolate, please contact our hospital immediately. Often, we will recommend that you bring your pet in so that our experienced veterinary staff can perform a physical examination and induce vomiting to help eliminate the chocolate from the stomach. Activated charcoal will also be administered to prevent further absorption of the compounds into the bloodstream.

Clinical signs of chocolate toxicity includes fast heart rate, abnormal heart rhythms, tremors, hyperexcitability, high blood pressure, muscle tremors, elevated body temperature, vomiting and seizures. If your pet has ingested a toxic amount of chocolate and is showing these abnormal signs, your veterinarian will recommend that your pet be hospitalized where we can monitor them for abnormal heart rhythms and seizures. Additional treatment such as intravenous fluids, drugs to support the heart, and a urinary catheter may be recommended. Most animals will be fine within 24—48 hours, and can go home after signs of toxicity resolve.

Dog's Weight (Pounds)	Milk Chocolate*	Chocolate chips*	Dark or Baker's Chocolate*
5	4	1.5	0.5
10	8	3.0	1.5
20	16	6.5	2.5
30	28	9.5	3.2
40	40	13.3	4.5
50	48	16.6	5.5
60	60	20	6.7
75	76	25	8.5

\* Amount of chocolate in ounces. 8 ounces = 1 cup. Your pet's weight is listed in the far left column. Follow the line to the right and look under the column marked milk chocolate, chocolate (semi-sweet) chips, or dark or baker's chocolate. If your pet has ingested the amount of chocolate listed, it may be in danger of developing chocolate toxicity.

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