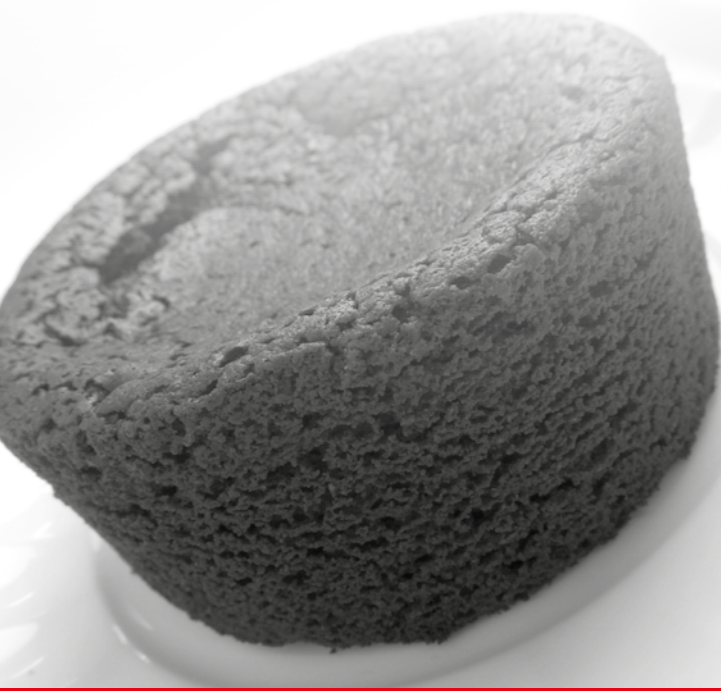


Prevention of chocolate poisoning

- Store chocolate securely to prevent access.
- Do not leave chocolate lying around.
- If baking, try to prevent access to any chocolate-containing cakes, biscuits or brownies that are cooling. Once cool, store securely.
- Prevent children from feeding chocolate to pets.
- At Easter do not leave Easter eggs or other chocolate products lying around. Take care during Easter egg hunts to prevent access.
- At Christmas do not hang any chocolate decorations on the tree and keep chocolate advent calendars out of reach.
- At Christmas do not leave any presents that may contain chocolate under the tree.



What to do if you think your pet has been poisoned

EMERGENCY ADVICE

- Call Animal PoisonLine on 01202 509000 **even if your pet is showing no signs** to find out whether a trip to the vet is required.
- Remove your pet from the source of poison.
- Do not try to make your pet vomit – NEVER give salt water.
- Collect the poison and take a sample/ container with you if you are advised to take your pet to the vet practice.



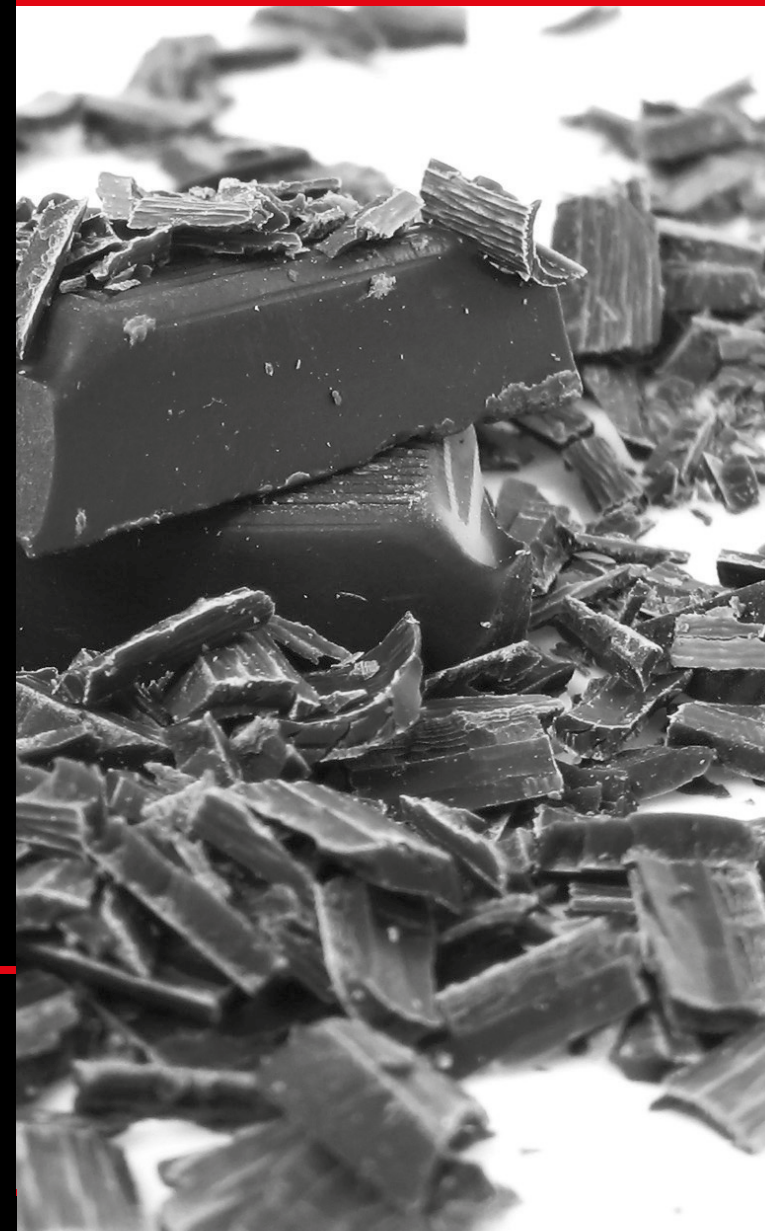
www.animalpoisonline.co.uk
24 hours a day (charges apply)



Animal PoisonLine is run by the VPIS, the UK's only animal poison centre, which has provided advice to vets on the management of poisoning in animals for over 25 years.



CHOCOLATE POISONING





What is chocolate poisoning?

Chocolate is a commonly available food and therefore chocolate poisoning is very common in dogs. Furthermore, dogs can often eat large quantities of chocolate.

Chocolate contains two related chemicals that can be toxic to pets, theobromine and caffeine.

The amount of caffeine and theobromine varies with the type of chocolate. White chocolate contains only very small quantities and there is little risk of toxic effects. Milk chocolate contains a larger quantity of these compounds and dark chocolate contains the highest concentration. Toxic effects can occur after only a relatively small dose of dark chocolate.

Sources of chocolate

Products containing chocolate (and/or theobromine) include cocoa powder, chocolate bars or boxes, chocolate biscuits and cakes, brownies, Easter eggs, chocolate raisins, chocolate-coated nuts and cocoa mulch (used in gardening).

What are the signs of chocolate poisoning?

Clinical signs of chocolate poisoning can start within a few hours of ingestion. There may be gastrointestinal signs, and caffeine and theobromine are stimulants of the brain and heart. Clinical signs may include:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Lethargy
- Panting
- Hyperactivity
- Restlessness
- Thirst
- Increased heart rate
- Tremors
- Convulsions

What to do if your pet has eaten chocolate

- If your pet has eaten chocolate – contact Animal PoisonLine immediately to find out whether you need to go to the vet .
- If the quantity eaten and your pet's weight are known it will be possible to determine if a toxic dose has been taken.
- Treatment will depend on how long ago the chocolate was eaten but may include drugs to remove the chocolate from the gut, intravenous fluids, sedatives or anticonvulsants.

Outcome of chocolate poisoning

Although chocolate poisoning is very common in pets, especially dogs, and frequently makes them ill, fatal cases are rare.

Prognosis is more guarded in those that develop severe signs such as convulsions or changes in heart rhythm, and pets with pre-existing heart disease may be more at risk of toxic effects on the heart.

